A THRILLING SERIAL BY ST. GEORGE RATHBORNE BEGINS NEXT WEEK

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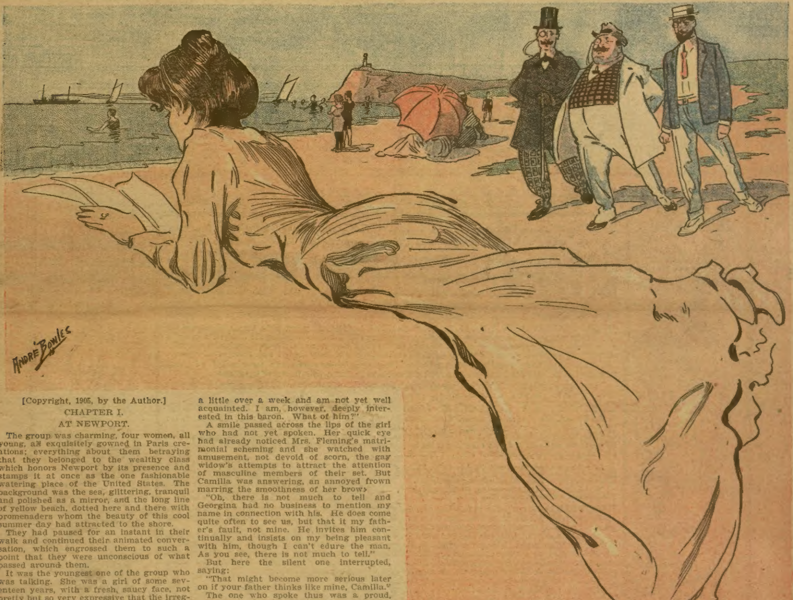
By
Adrienne
Roucolle.

TITLES FOR SALE

Or,
When Princes
Come to Woo.



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CHAPTER I.

AT NEWPORT.

The group was charming, four women, all young, all exquisitely gowned in Paris creations; everything about them betraying that they belonged to the wealthy class which honors Newport by its presence and stamps it at once as the one fashionable watering place of the United States. The background was the sea, glittering, tranquil and polished as a mirror, and the long line of yellow beach, dotted here and there with promenaders whom the beauty of this cool summer day had attracted to the shore.

They had paused for an instant in their walk and continued their animated conversation, which engrossed them to such a point that they were unconscious of what passed around them.

It was the youngest one of the group who was talking. She was a girl of some seventeen years, with a fresh, saucy face, not pretty but so very expressive that the irregularity of the features was soon forgotten in the study of the wonderful play of thoughts and various feelings mirrored upon them.

"Ah, you can laugh all you please," she was saying, "but I still insist that nowadays, with all these noblemen hanging around, I prefer to still be a schoolgirl than a young lady whom her father wishes to sell for a title. Just ask my sister what she thinks of the German Baron von Cottendrof."

"Georgina, I wish you would keep still," answered the one thus addressed, as a sudden flood of color dyed her cheeks.

Camilla Taylor did not resemble her sister in the least. Her doll-like face with the traditional flaxen hair and large baby-blue eyes, rosy cheeks and perfect complexion, had no expression, no life. It was simply a pretty face which to a close observer would have betrayed lack of character, a weak, yielding nature which never had a will of its own.

But her blushing reply only provoked additional curiosity on the part of the two listeners. Mrs. Fleming, the chaperon of the group, was scarcely more than a girl herself and far more ardent than either of her charges in her husband-hunting maneuvers. Mr. Fleming had been dead two years and his widow now wished to find a man willing to console her. She turned hastily to Camilla, saying in her usual gushing way:

"On the contrary, Camilla, tell us all about him. You see I have only been here a little over a week and am not yet well acquainted. I am, however, deeply interested in this baron. What of him?"

A smile passed across the lips of the girl who had not yet spoken. Her quick eye had already noticed Mrs. Fleming's matrimonial scheming and she watched with amusement, not devoid of scorn, the gay widow's attempts to attract the attention of masculine members of their set. But Camilla was answering, an annoyed frown marring the smoothness of her brow.

"Oh, there is not much to tell and Georgina had no business to mention my name in connection with his. He does come quite often to see us, but that it my father's fault, not mine. He invites him continually and insists on my being pleasant with him, though I can't edure the man. As you see, there is not much to tell."

But here the silent one interrupted, saying:

"That might become more serious later on if your father thinks like mine, Camilla."

The one who spoke thus was a proud, gorgeous creature with the mien and form of a queen, a striking face which was more handsome than beautiful. Something cold in the eye, a disdainful curve of the scarlet lip, the sneering hauteur of the voice, pointed her out as a spoiled child, one who had tasted all the luxuries of life and at twenty was tired of everything. Such was the fact. Katharine Merriman had since her babyhood days not had a wish which was not satisfied. Spoiled, first by her doting father, she had later been spoiled by society who had bowed down before her striking beauty and the glitter of her father's millions.

"And what does your father think, pray?" asked Mrs. Fleming.

Katharine had a half-scornful shrug of the shoulders as she answered:

"Oh, he thinks that we wealthy Americans lack but one thing—titles; and as our government refuses to grant any, he sees no other way but marrying to get one. Why, he would be the happiest man in the United States if he could speak of me as his daughter the 'Duchess or Princess of So-and-So.'"

"That is just what papa told Camilla," broke in Georgina, clapping her hands in girlish delight, "and he even said that, some way or other, she must get an offer from one of the three foreigners."

"Georgina, I positively forbid you to say another word," and stern tones broke the usual languor of Camilla's voice.

"It's useless trying to get an avowal from Camilla. Besides, we all know that her heart is not bent on titles when Rupert Bancroft is around. Come, Katharine, I hope you will not be so shy and will tell us which of the three has taken your fancy."

"For good looks, I should prefer the handsome Prince del Capitolli, but there is no hope in that quarter, Juliet monopolizes all his time and attention. Why, if she were a poor girl I should say that he loved her; as it is, one can never tell—he might be a skillful comedian and nothing more."

These words were accompanied by a shrug of the shoulders, a familiar gesture with the young girl.

"If he is a comedian, he is an excellent one and poor Juliet an easy dupe, for she loves him."

"It's her nature," and there was a shade of scorn in Katherine's voice. "She is romantic like the women of long ago. She thinks love is everything in life. With me it is different. I like society and prefer to shine in the social world than in the humble duties of home life. So to me, the idea of marrying a title is not in the least distasteful."

"It is because you have never loved. Wait until you do, then the false glare of society will have no attractions for you," said Camilla.

Mrs. Fleming turned to the young girl with a meaning smile:

"Poor Camilla speaks from experience, and I am sure she would prefer to live in a humble cot with Rupert Bancroft than in Baron von Cottendrof's stately German castles. But, Katharine, you have not told us which is the lucky man."

"None as yet, for even with ruined noblemen seeking rich wives, it is not the proper thing for girls to make an offer of marriage, and as yet none of these gentlemen has honored me with a proposal."

A deep expression of surprise had chased the smile from Georgina's lips and she suddenly broke in with the usual impetuosity of her nature.

"So you would marry any one of them—even the fat baron, if he asked you?"

"Why not, child?" and a quizzical light flashed through Katharine's dark eyes.

"And not love him the least bit?"

"Certainly not, but I told you before I could live without love, and I have read enough of the European style of living to know that I would not have to endure too much of my husband's society. His clubs, his friends and horses would give him only a few hours daily to remain in his home, and during that time I could afford to be pleasant with him."

A deep indignation at the heartlessness of this remark caused Camilla to ask:

"Still you would know that he married you for your money, because he was ruined!"

Katharine gave another of her expressive shrugs, then replied:

"Come, Camilla, you're somewhat like Juliet, with outlandish ideas about love and marriage. I should have no right to reproach him for marrying my money since I should have married his title and the position that title would bring me."

They walked on at this last remark, and for awhile all four remained silent. The cause of the discussion had been the arrival in America two months before of three titled foreign noblemen.

The first to arrive was an Italian prince, whose dark beauty, sad dreamy eyes and gentle manner had created quite a stir in New York social circles. Besides his title was elevated and the Del Capitolli was one of the most ancient families of Italy. At once all the most exclusive homes of the metropolis were thrown wide open to welcome him and within a month he was the lion of the day.

But from the very first he showed his preference for Juliet Bencroft, one of the richest girls in her own right in New York. Both her parents were dead and she lived with her brother, a young man four years her senior. Their father, a rich speculator in Pennsylvania oil land, had died four years before, leaving three million dollars to each of his children, besides a fair amount of real estate. This, of course, made Juliet Bencroft a glowing target for fortune-hunters of all sorts, and when Prince del Capitolli began courting her all her friends thought that it was more the money than the girl which attracted him.

But the prince did not long remain the hero of the day, since about a month after his arrival he had to share his honors with two other noblemen—Baron von Cottendrof and Count de Belvedere, one representing Germany, the other France.

They differed greatly in appearance both with one another and with the prince. And as one young matron pertly remarked:

"The American girls had surely an excellent assortment to choose from."

The baron was fat, short and pompous in appearance. Speaking English correctly, he, nevertheless, had a strong German accent which grated painfully on the ear. His manners were perfect, still there was something of the dancing bear order when he attempted to be pleasant. Besides this he was not handsome, for the features were too fat for perfection, the eyes small and beady, of a neutral tint; in fact, he was a very poor specimen of the German race which is noted for its many tall, handsome, well-built men.

The girls who could have looked with favor upon the prince shrank in horror from this remnant of a man, and the fact that he was a fortune-hunter was more repulsive in him than it ever could be either with the count or with the prince.

As to the Count de Belvedere, he was all that a fastidious taste could dream or desire. Almost effeminate in the care of his toilet, of medium height, slight of limb and elegant of form, he had besides a pleasing face, which though not handsome in the full sense of the word, always called forth a second look from women's eyes. He was a pleasant talker and spoke English fluently with the poetry of expression, rare to our matter-of-fact Anglo-Saxon natures, yet which is so successful with women. The slight French accent which tinted his speech added a charm to his voice, for, more fortunate than the baron, his native tongue had more harmony than the guttural drawl which characterizes a German speaking English.

The three men had been together in New York society, but in two weeks their positions were clearly defined. The prince would be courted for his name and handsome face, the count for the exquisite polish of his manners, his elegance and his art of turning a compliment; as to the baron, his only hope lay with ambitious fathers who wished to have their daughters marry titles and add the glow of nobility to names that only a few generations ago had been "sullied" by trade.

Thus matters stood at the opening of this story, but with the summer months the scene had changed from New York to Newport, yet the actors were the same—the fortune-hunters, the foolishly proud fathers, and the victims who would be sacrificed to the cupidity of the one and the ambition of the other.

CHAPTER II.

UNCLE SAM.

Suddenly Mrs. Fleming broke the silence, saying as she pointed to a gentleman who was slowly walking toward the group:

"Why, girls, who is that gentleman over yonder?"

Georgina gave an exclamation of delight, and as she hurried to the newcomer she cried:

"Oh, it's Uncle Sam, who has returned from New York."

The next minute she had rejoined him and, clinging to his arm with a loving gesture of deep affection, she advanced with him toward the others, who had walked on more leisurely.

Mrs. Fleming eyed the stranger with the glance of a connoisseur, and this brief examination must have been to his advantage since she turned eagerly to Camilla with the question:

"Uncle Sam? Why, where did you pick up this uncle? I never heard of him before."

Camilla laughed as she replied:

"He is not my uncle any more than he is yours or Katharine's, only he is nicknamed Uncle Sam. His real name is Samuel Barton."

"Samuel Barton? Oh, I have heard of him, rather eccentric and—a bachelor?" with a questioning inflection on the last word.

Katharine laughed outright. Mrs. Fleming's matrimonial ambition amused her, and it was she who replied to her question:

"Yes, a bachelor. Uncle Sam has never had a love affair, so far as I can remember. He is father, or rather uncle, to all girls, but lover of none. There is a chance for you, Mrs. Fleming, for I have been told that it takes a widow to rope in a bachelor of Uncle Sam's type."

Further conversation was impossible, for the object of these remarks was only a few yards distant and was already bowing to the two girls with old-fashioned courtesy.

He was a man whose tall, spare form and clean-shaven face, eagle eyes and authoritative mouth left one to wonder as to his age, for he might be equally thirty or fifty. Still, on closer observation, the tiny wrinkles about the eyes and mouth, the silver threads in the hair, the slight stoop of the shoulders, indicated that he was no longer young, while the somewhat bitter droop of the mouth spoke of some past sorrow which had forever scarred his heart.

Handsome he was not, his features were too sharp, the cheek bones too high, the chin too massive, the eyes too small; still there was about him a certain elegance of mien which redeemed many things; besides that, his smile was engaging and pleasant, his voice rich and deep, while all who knew him said he had the kindest of hearts.

He had many friends and a few enemies, but as these enemies recruited themselves

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among the dishonest members of society, they, too, were to his credit. The poor, the needy, the unhappy, blessed his name; he was ever ready to defend the oppressed, to rescue the fallen. In one word, he was one of those rare characters who combine in one the strength of the male with the love and pity and tenderness of a woman.

After he had greeted the two girls Camilla said:

"Uncle Sam, I wish you to meet papa's cousin, Mrs. Fleming, who is to chaperon us this summer. Mrs. Fleming, Mr. Barton."

Samuel Barton raised his hat, while his sharp gray eyes took in the slightest detail of the widow's painted, made-up face, and being a quick judge of character, he addressed her as he knew she would like to be addressed—with a compliment.

"I am happy to meet you, Mrs. Fleming, and must congratulate you on your pleasant duties of chaperoning these charming girls. You can't imagine what a lovely group you made as I came up—a goddess surrounded by her nymphs."

Mrs. Fleming's pleased laugh told him that he had succeeded, and he at once classed her as one of the insipid society women who would long for admiration even in their coffins.

"I did not know that Uncle Sam was such a courtier," she said as though to cover her embarrassment.

But Camilla turned to Barton, saying:

"Oh, Uncle Sam, Mrs. Fleming would like to know how you came by that name. Will you not tell her?"

With the gushing vivacity of a schoolgirl, Mrs. Fleming broke in before Barton could answer. "Oh, yes, do tell me. I am dying to know!"

"It's not much of a story, Mrs. Fleming, and does not merit the interest you are so kind to give it. It was several years ago, when I had passed the line of youth, after which dancing and flirting ceases to be the only attractions——"

Here Mrs. Fleming thought prudent to return the compliment made her a few moments before, and with a coquettish glance she interrupted:

"Several years ago, did you say? Why, I fear you must have counted the years double, since even now you have scarcely reached the line of which you speak."

Uncle Sam had a slight frown. Like most men he disliked the women who court all unmarried men in the hope of gaining an offer of marriage, and who would marry any man regardless of his condition, character, almost of color. But, being a gentleman, he hid his growing disgust and with undue gravity replied:

"You honor me, madam, for I fear I am far from meriting that compliment. Besides, as you remarked, some years do count double in a man's life, and, be it age or something else, for many years I have ceased to find attractions in the lighter pleasures of existence and to give color to my idle life I turned to politics."

Mrs. Fleming looked up in surprise.

"To politics! Yet I never——" she paused, fearing to say something that might offend him.

"Yet you never heard my name coupled with the elections;" he finished for her. "You are right, I turned to politics, but politics after my fashion. I defend the interest of the country at large. I want prosperity and peace, but I don't follow any one line of thought. I have no party; I believe in no one platform. I am a free thinker on all political subjects. But"—suddenly recalled to himself by the rather bewildered expression on his listener's face—"pardon me, this profession of faith must weary you."

He had guessed rightly, but Mrs. Fleming was too old a coquette to let him see that he was right. She knew that a man would never admire a woman who did not find delight in his hobby, so she hastened to add:

"On the contrary, your remarks are highly interesting, and I pray you to dwell at length upon your unique way of being a politician."

Barton was too clever not to guess the subterfuge, and would, no doubt, have cut his explanation short had not Camilla said:

"Why, Uncle Sam, you know what you say is always interesting, no matter on what subject you talk. Am I not right, girls?"

"Oh, certainly," came the prompt reply from Georgina and from Katharine, while from the eyes of the latter flashed one of those looks of admiring affection so rare to the proud belle.

Uncle Sam felt that the girls were sincere and more to please them than the gushing widow, he allowed himself to continue, first remarking, as he looked with fatherly tenderness on the three fresh faces upturned to his:

"See how my girls spoil me, Mrs. Fleming. To tell the truth, I am prouder of their good opinion and affection than I would be to become president of the United States."

"You have no need to be president of our republic since your name of Uncle Sam makes you its father," answered Mrs. Fleming, as she cast a rather anxious look toward her charges, somewhat jealous of Barton's evident tenderness toward the three girls.

"Thank you, but your words remind me that I was to tell you a story. So when I entered into politics my unusual ideas made me a hard person to class, for maybe one year I sided with the Democrats, the next I went Republican or refused to support either party. One evening at a club dinner toasts were in order, and some one rose and offered one to Uncle Sam, saying that I, alone, merited that name because I placed the interests of my country before any personal consideration or advantage."

"And the name was well merited," broke in Mrs. Fleming, eager to prove her interest, "since Uncle Sam, being the patron of our republic, only one who took an unselfish interest in its welfare merited the title."

"Since that dinner I have kept the name with my friends, and later, even formal acquaintances made use of it."

These last sentences were spoken rather hurriedly: it was evident that Barton wished to drop the subject and save himself further gushing remarks from the coquettish widow, but he had to endure one more, since Mrs. Fleming said:

"Permit me to say that that name suits you as no other could. Besides your Christian name is Samuel, I believe, and thus it seems that from early babyhood you were destined to become the 'uncle' of all Americans."

CHAPTER III.

JULIET.

Mrs. Fleming's last remark was lost on Barton, for with a sudden contraction of the brow he concentrated his gaze and evidently his thoughts on a fresh, girlish vision in blue dress and large sun hat, who was dreamily walking along the beach, her eyes fixed afar on the smooth expanse of the sea scintillating in the sunlight. The figure was small and slender, a child in height but a woman in form, one of those dainty creatures whose delicate smallness recalled to the mind the grace and charm of a miniature.

She was slowly advancing toward the group, though wholly unconscious of their presence, wrapped in thought. Katharine, following the direction of Barton's gaze, saw her also, and exclaimed:

"Oh, look, here comes the princess, and see, her walk and the proud dignity of her mien seem to indicate that she is rehearsing the role!"

Uncle Sam started, the frown on his brow deepened, and it was almost fiercely that he turned to Katharine with the question:

"Princess—you call Juliet a princess? What do you mean?"

Katharine did not at once answer, but looked with wondering eyes at the changed face before her, then slowly made reply:

"I thought you knew. You don't mean to say that you have not noticed that the handsome Prince del Capitolli is paying open court to her and that by her manner she shows that she would not object to become a princess!"

In a movement wholly unconscious, but with a face strangely white and working, Barton seized Katharine by the arm and asked with almost pleading accents in his voice:

"Katharine, you don't mean that Juliet could love that fortune-hunter, that—that she might marry him! I have noticed his attentions to her, but I thought, I hoped, she would see through his game, that she would judge him at his true value!"

He paused as he noticed the deep surprise expressed on the faces of his listeners, but Katharine now answered:

"Uncle Sam, you startled me, your manner is so wild that one would almost be tempted to think that you loved Juliet."

Barton relaxed his hold on Katharine's arm and passed his hand over his brow as though to chase some mournful vision, then with calmer tones, as he looked anew toward the young girl who had just paused in her walk and was now making with her parasol designs upon the sand, perhaps tracing there some beloved name to judge by the dreamy expression of the face:

"Love her! Yes, but not in the sense you mean, Katharine, for I love her as I do you all—love her youth, her innocence, her beauty, her tender heart which I will not let that foreign hound break if I can help it."

While he spoke, Juliet had been joined by another woman, who had leaped from the wheel she was riding and had patted the young girl on the shoulder in a boyish gesture, causing her to start as though rudely awakened from a dream and to hastily erase with her tiny boot the writing on the sand.

The contrast between the two standing there in the golden rays of the setting sun was as marked as the difference between day and night. One was all grace, all beauty and daintiness: the other of the rough, new-woman type, with no attempt at elegance. A short skirt of a natural tint, a dark shirtwaist with a stiff collar and a black tie, a face which had passed the prime of youth and whose skin had been tanned and coarsened by outdoor exercise, a form to which years had added a fullness of outline but not of grace, made her indeed the antipode of the petite, poetically sweet girl by her side.

It seemed, to see them thus side by side, like the bringing together of a woman of the past with one of the future, when strength, physical and intellectual, will be considered the ultra-fashionable charm of women. Why could this not be, since tastes differ as the years go by? Our grandmothers would have been as shocked with our athletic college girls and would have called them unsexed creatures, as much as we conservative women of the present consider the new woman proper, yet, perhaps, she, too, may be but the vanguard of a future generation of—pardon the words—manly women.

But Camilla, who, like Katharine, had been startled by the expression of Barton's face, now broke in with the words:

"How you hate those foreigners, Uncle Sam! Could they not be sincere sometimes, and truly love the girls they marry?"

"Never!" and there were stern accents of relentless hate in Barton's voice as he pronounced that word. "Greed for gold, not love, brings them here. Your money, my dears, is to those worn-out butterflies of degenerate races like a bright lamp to a summer moth, only with them it's not the moth that is burnt but rather the one who furnishes the lamp. Poor Juliet, with her tender heart, would feel the disappointment more than any other."

Mrs. Fleming had remained silent until now, because she thought it prudent to study Barton before she expressed an opinion on any subject, wishing to be sure what he thought before she said anything, since she had been told that a man's self-love is so easy to wound, and not for the world would she displease Barton, yet she had made up her mind that he would make an excellent catch, being rich and moving in the best society. But when she saw the woman who had joined Juliet, she could not still her curiosity enough not to ask:

"Why, who is that—that person talking with Miss Bencroft? You see I am not yet well acquainted in the East, most of my life has been passed in San Francisco, and it was only when a few weeks ago that Cousin Vincent, asking me to chaperon his daughters this summer, that I came to New York. Of course I feel strange yet and——"

She cast a look toward Barton which was meant to be appealing, but which made no impression upon him other than to renew his thoughts that she was courting him. Still he answered:

"That lady," with marked stress upon the last words, "is Miss Frances Wadworth, a very dear friend of mine. She is without doubt one of the cleverest women in the United States."

Mrs. Fleming bit her lip. She had made a bad move, but not daunted, she hastened to add:

"How strange that clever people should be so eccentric! I always admire intellect and therefore would be so glad to meet Miss—Miss——"

"Wadworth," answered Barton, shortly. "Ah, they have seen us and are coming to meet us. Poor Frances," he added, as much to himself as to the others, "does have a strange taste in dress, still I can recall the time when it was different. Why, you girls," turning to the three girls, "could scarcely equal her in elegance and costliness of dress, and that's saying a good deal, is it not, Mrs. Fleming?"

"Yes, certainly, as far as my two charges are concerned, one season's toilets would keep an ordinary family a year. So Miss Wadworth was a belle! What made her change?"

Mrs. Fleming was interested in Frances Wadworth, not because of the oddity of her dress, nor because of her cleverness, but because Barton had spoken of her as a very dear friend. Perhaps, after all, she was a rival.

Barton answered:

"Oh, it was after she began to study and entered the field of letters."

"Then," cried Georgina hastily, "I do hope I'll never become clever."

A general laugh followed this sally just as Juliet and Miss Wadworth came up to them, Frances holding her wheel while she walked by Juliet's side.

CHAPTER IV.

THE NEW WOMAN.

As soon as Frances Wadworth had joined the group she cried in her loud, hearty voice:

"Hello, girls, and how's my dear Uncle Sam this afternoon? Haven't seen you since you went to New York. Everything all right in the metropolis?" and she clasped the hand of Barton extended to her.

"Well, yes, everything is the same, only powerfully hot," he replied, as he answered Juliet's greeting. Then, "Frances, Mrs. Fleming, one of our newcomers, wishes to have the pleasure of meeting you. Mrs. Fleming, Miss Wadworth."

"Glad to meet you," said Frances, as she extended her large hand and nearly crushed in a hearty pressure the slender, delicately-gloved one the widow gave her.

Mrs. Fleming murmured something about the pleasure being mutual, while taking in the very minutest detail of Miss Wadworth's face and toilet. The eyes were really beautiful, she thought, dark, luminous, large and full of intelligence and with now and then a glow of tenderness speaking of a loving heart, the mouth was large but expressive, the cheek-bones high, the forehead elevated and broad, the dark hair straight and cut short like a man's, the nose somewhat flat and large; and Mrs. Fleming's verdict was:

"Not pretty, and certainly not graceful nor stylish."

She gave a sigh of relief. If Frances Wadworth was a rival, she surely could not be very dangerous, yet for some reason she felt an instinctive aversion for Frances, perhaps becouse she felt her intellectual inferiority, for there was very little depth, either morally or intellectually, about the dashing widow.

But Juliet, after her greeting to the girls, felt somewhat annoyed by the persistent look Barton bent upon her. She went up to him and, laying her hand on his arm with a gesture full of tenderness, said, as she raised her soft gray eyes to him:

"Uncle Sam, where are your welcoming smiles, have you left them all in New York, and have none left for your little Juliet?"

With a start, like one suddenly recalled to himself, Barton placed his hand over the tiny one resting so lightly on his arm, then fixing her with a penetrating look from his piercing eyes, said slowly:

"Never think that, dear. I will smile as long as you remain simple Juliet Bencroft, but would soon forget how should you ever become a princess."

A sudden flush colored the usually pale cheeks of the young girl, and with a start she hastened to withdraw her hand, saying:

"What do you mean?" Then to the others, "What have you been telling him?"

"Your start tells me you understand my meaning, and the bright color on your cheeks speaks of the emotion this causes you," replied Barton, as the frown on his brow deepened still more.

But Miss Wadworth came to the rescue of the blushing girl, for she broke in:

"Don't make too much of the starts and blushes of a girl of Juliet's type, Sam. Why, she would start if you told her the sky was blue and blush if you mentioned her brother. Poor Juliet has inherited all the weakness and sensitiveness of the women of the past. She is not like the newer race of women, who take their own parts, defend their rights and take their places among man, share his labors, his glory and in only a few rare instances consent to share his name."

In spite of her desire not to offend Barton, Mrs. Fleming could not repress her contempt and allowed it to find expression on her face. Frances shocked all her sense of propriety: her dress, her loud voice, and the familiarity with which she addressed Barton, all were in variance with her ideas and seeing that while Frances was near there was no chance to make an impression upon Barton, she turned to him with her most bewitching smile and said, in tones purposely low and soft to better mark the contrast between her refinement and Frances' vulgarity:

"We must bid you good-afternoon, Mr. Barton, as it is getting late and we must rest for the ball this evening. Will we have the pleasure of seeing you there?"

"Which ball? You know that at Newport it is always necessary to specify the place," was Barton's cold reply.

"Why, my cousin's, of course. There is only one of importance tonight, since it is the only one which will be honored by the presence of three European celebrities."

A sudden harshness passed over the thin, nervous face, the lips closed tightly over the teeth, and there was in the cold, measured tones a veiled menace for the three noblemen as Barton answered:

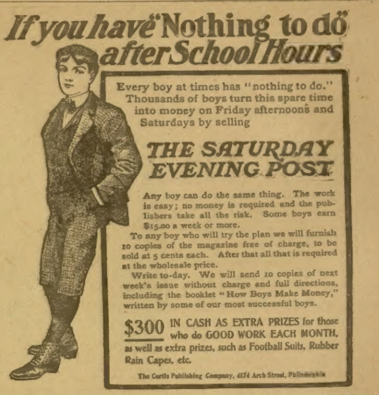
"In that case, yes, I will be there. You may be sure to find me present wherever those three men are to be found."

But Mrs. Fleming was too preoccupied in herself and the impression she was making to take any notice of this change of manner on Barton's part, for she said gaily:

"Then au revoir, until tonight. Come, girls, we must go," and with a wave of the hand to Juliet and a cold bow to Frances, she swept proudly away, followed by her three charges, who had bowed to Barton and the two ladies.

When they were out of ear-shot Frances turned to Barton and as a quizzical smile parted her lips, she said:

"Whee, what a look she cast upon me! If I was of the sensitive kind I would feel crushed. This Mrs. Fleming does not admire the new woman. Well, I can say that



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I don't like the widow who is ever on the lookout for husband number two. Why, she has only been here a few days, yet from what I have been told she has already paid open court to every unmarried man in Newport, from youngsters barely twenty to old widowers over seventy. I have long wished to meet her, such women interest me, they are a psychological problem I enjoy studying." Then she added, with a laugh: "I suppose, Sam, you're her latest victim. From now on she will haunt you like a shadow; tonight she will make open court to you, and tomorrow she will announce to her friends that Mr. Samuel Barton was quite taken up with her."

It was one of Juliet's good points that she never allowed any one to speak ill of an absent person in her presence, so she said, wishing to change the conversation:

"Come, Miss Wadworth, let's not talk about Mrs. Fleming, but rather admire the beauties of the sea, the exquisite fleeciness of the clouds."

Frances laughed, and patting the young girl on the shoulder said, turning to Barton:

"Here's a poet for you, Sam! This little girl should have been born a hundred years ago when it was proper for a girl to think only of love and poetry."

"Yes, Juliet, you are too sensitive for our twentieth century, and I fear for your happiness," and real anxiety was expressed in the firm, rich voice.

"You fear for my happiness, why?"

"You may think me very inquisitive, perhaps, yet I wish you to remember what an old friend I am and to believe that nothing but real affection for you and interest in your welfare would prompt my action."

Juliet was moved by the almost pitiful tenderness of his tones, and she hastened to exclaim:

"Oh, Uncle Sam, you need not have told me that. You have been almost a second father to me. Your affection for me dates back as many years as I can remember. You were a friend of my parents, our protector and guardian when they were taken from us and Rupert and I were left alone. Oh, you can say what you please, Uncle Sam, I will always listen to your words as to a father's advice."

Frances Wadworth was not at her ease, with true womanly instinct she felt she was in the way; so when Juliet paused, she said with her usual candor:

"I fear I'm going to be in the way, folks. Besides, I wish to 'phone my publishers before night. Though I came to Newport for needed rest, I want them to know that I am still in the land of the living. They might palm off some other book before mine and make me lose the chance of the holiday trade. Aside from this, the real reason is that I want to get away, for I see that Sam is dying to have you make him your confidant, Juliet, and you might be embarrassed to talk of love and lovers before me who know nothing of the sentiment."

She had a nervous laugh while speaking the last words, but neither of her listeners noticed its bitter ring, nor saw the shade of poignant sorrow, of hunger for love, of suffering at not having been understood, which for awhile paled and aged Miss Wadworth's healthy face. But this passed like a flash and straightening her wheel she lowered the pedal ready to mount.

Barton asked:

"Are you going tonight, Frank?"

Frances laughed. "Certainly, for I am gathering material for a new book and will want to study characters. Those titled cads will furnish their share; besides, Mrs. Fleming will prove an interesting study. She is a type I should like to describe some day. I may also learn the art of lovemaking by watching her and you tonight, for surely her 'love affair' with Samuel Barton will make some progress during the evening."

She cast an amused glance at Barton, bowed to Juliet, mounted her wheel and rode away at so rapid a pace that she was soon lost in the distance. Uncle Sam and Juliet were alone.

CHAPTER V.

THE STORY OF A HEART.

Now that they were alone a sudden oppression filled Juliet's heart. She felt that Barton would question her regarding her sentiments toward Prince del Capitolli, and she hesitated to tell him.

Uncle Sam fixed a penetrating gaze on the girl's fair face, then said abruptly:

"Were you returning home, Juliet?"

"Yes, I have been for a long walk and, feeling tired, had the intention of returning to the cottage."

"Then I will walk home with you and we can talk as we walk. We have not had a quiet chat for a long time—not since that foreign prince has been hanging over you like a vulture over his prey."

They had walked on, but these last words caused Juliet to look up with a startled glance, then remark with pained accents in her voice:

"Oh, Uncle Sam, what an ugly comparison; Prince del Capitolli looks anything but like a vulture. He is considered handsome."

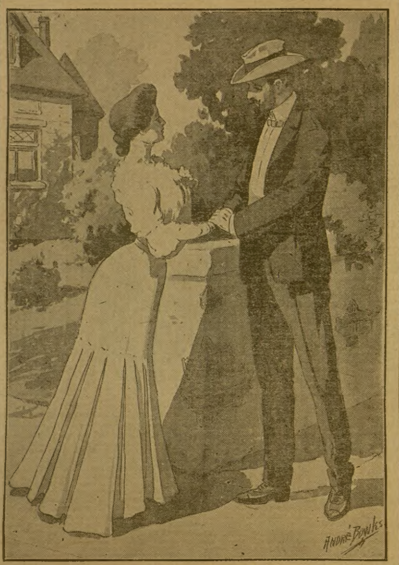
Barton's voice was cold and hard as he answered:

"Handsome as to face, I admit, but what tells you that his heart is not blacker than a raven's wing, his soul more depraved than a fiend's?"

The steely glitter of hate which filled his eyes showed Juliet that a battle was imminent in which she would be forced to defend the man she loved from the cold, logical attacks which Barton would make against him. Though small in form, she was a woman of strong character, she could be loyal to those she loved; so with a sudden resolution flashing through her usually dreamy eye, she retorted:

"And what tells you that he is such? Could he not be as noble as he looks, as good as he is handsome? Every question has a pro and con, and to form a just opinion one must study both sides with equal impartiality."

"You defend him!" and there was a world of despair in Barton's voice. "That tells me that my worst fears were well founded, and to save you from your folly I must tell you the one love story of my life. You shall know why Samuel Barton has remained unmarried."



"Would you remember him?"

Juliet started at these words and exclaimed:

"Ah, I always thought there was a love affair in your past!" she exclaimed, and, being a woman, curiosity could be read in her eager tones.

"Yes, Juliet, there is a love story in my past and for your sake only will I reopen those wounds and lay bare before you my heart which, like yours, was made only to love and to be loved."

There was so much sorrow, such depths of suffering betrayed in the tones in which these words were pronounced that Juliet looked with renewed interest on her companion's face and noticed that it had suddenly become wan and aged, that the lips had lost their carmine, the eyes had become dark with regret and pain. Moved by the sight, Juliet cried:

"Oh, don't tell me if it pains you—don't speak of the past if that past is sad!"

But Barton had already controlled his momentary emotion, and it was in a firm, steady voice that he answered:

"No, child, you must know, for I must save you."

"Save me! I don't understand. Save me from what?"

"From sharing the fate of the woman I loved."

They had reached the cottage which Rupert Bencroft had rented for the season and where brother and sister lived in a somewhat simple style with four servants. Barton opened the garden gate, saying as he moved aside to allow Juliet to enter:

"We had better enter, as the public highway is scarcely a place to speak of the things I wish to tell you."

Juliet urged him to enter the house, but he replied as he pointed to a bench beneath the trees:

"No, we will be better out here. The day is beautiful, the view exquisite. Besides, I prefer not to be indoors, there are moments when the limit of four walls is oppressive."

Juliet could not take her eyes from his face. He was so changed, so unlike himself, this man she had known since childhood. Besides, a woman adores a romance and makes of the man who has had one a hero to be gazed at with awe and veneration. Still Barton did not speak, for with his eyes fixed afar on the fiery clouds of sunset, he was living over the dream of his youth, which for the sake of the young girl he was calling into life from the ashes of the past. At last with a start he returned to reality and, standing before Juliet, who had taken a seat on the bench, he began speaking slowly as though he wished to read on her face the slightest shade of emotion his words would call there.

"Juliet, years ago there lived a girl who was like you—not in features, perhaps, but in disposition. She loved nature, God and his creatures, but above all she was destined to love with a blind passion the man who would touch her heart."

He hesitated for the space of a second, then his voice becoming harsh, he continued:

"That man came. He was a foreign nobleman, and came to America for a wife—a rich one, of course. I was engaged to her at the time, Juliet, but I knew I did not possess her heart, yet hoped that my devotion might in time win hers in return. But his name and his courtly grace and foreign polish had soon won what I had sought for in vain—her love, that deep, passionate blind love of which I have already spoken."

"What," interrupted Juliet, "she left you to marry him—she broke her engagement?"

"She married him, yes, for I loved her too much to keep her to an engagement her heart did not sanction. They were married and went back to Italy to live. Then began the martyrdom of her life. He had married her for her money, and therefore did not remain faithful to the wife he did not love. His life of debauchery was well known even in New York, then, after three years of unhappy married life, he abandoned her, taking with him the larger part of her fortune, left her to enjoy her wealth with a little peasant lass he had betrayed and whom he had learned to love with all the ardor of his selfish yet passionate nature. The unfortunate wife lived a few more years, then died broken-hearted and alone."

"Oh, how she must have suffered!" broke from Juliet, with emotion.

Barton did not seem to heed the interruption, for he continued slowly, with a pause between each word that they might lose none of their tragic meaning:

"I have now to tell you the name of the hero of this tale. He was called—Prince Paolo del Capitolli."

Juliet sprang to her feet, her face pale, her eyes wild, her body quivering.

"Capitolli!" she murmured, in strange, hoarse tones. "Did you say Capitolli, a relative to——"

"The father, I suppose, of the one who today is trying to win your hand and your fortune."

"But you said your—she died alone, she had no children! It must be some name similar to his, some distant relative, some ——" She could not continue; emotion, suspense, drowned the words in her throat.

"I am not sure, but will know before morning. I have sent a cablegram to Italy, but I think this Prince Paolo del Capitolli must be the son of the peasant, the one who broke Marie's heart. Knowing her fate, Juliet, will you still risk having a like one by marrying that man's son?"

Juliet had dropped back on the bench and with hands tightly clasped on her lap, she looked up to him with a sad, hopeless, glance.

"Uncle Sam, pity me, it is too late, for—for—I love him, and be he angel or demon he has my heart, he can have me even were I sure that such a marriage would bring me more tears than smiles."

"But, Juliet, you——"

She did not let him continue, but interrupted, hardly consicous in her overpowering emotion that he had spoken:

"I love him because his eyes, his voice, recall to me my little Italian sweetheart of long ago. You surely remember Pieto, the street musician who used to play for Rupert and I when we were children?"

"Yes, but I——"

"Well, though nobody guessed it at the time, I loved that boy. We were both children, scarcely more than babies, yet, if ever love existed, it did in my heart for that unhappy child of the streets. When he went away and we had become separated, I mourned for him, longed for his presence, hungered for a sight of his face, as any woman might have done. And now, in spite of the years which have passed, that love story of my youth has so overshadowed the present that my heart is all the more susceptible to all that recalls even in a dim way the face I have not been able to forget."

Juliet's last words had caused Barton to start, and now that she paused in her hurried words, he asked:

"Does Prince del Capitolli resemble this Pieto?"

"I cannot say for sure, since I can only remember the eyes—sad, dreamy, dark and tender, and the prince has eyes like those, eyes which from the very first have fascinated me."

"But now that you know his father's history—oh, Juliet, can't you tear that budding love from your heart, can't you?"

She shook her head, then:

"No, it is too late. Besidse, the love you think is only budding is full grown and its roots extend so deeply in my heart that to tear it out I should need to tear out my heart as well," and pointing to the ocean, "See that wave over yonder; can it leave the sea? No. Well, it is the same with my love for Prince del Capitolli; it can't separate itself from the heart which gave it birth, it must live as long as that heart and increase as long as one quiver remains to give it life!"

"Yet, Juliet, can't you see that he is after your money, that all he wants is your millions to return luster to his name?"

Again she shook her head.

"No, I can't see it thus. Though his lips have, as yet, remained silent, his eyes have spoken and he has eyes which can not lie. I feel, I know, that he loves me, not my wealth. It may be true he did come to America for a rich wife, but it is love which moves him and love that keeps him silent."

"Keeps him silent?"

Juliet had risen during her last speech and in her defense of the man she loved she put forth all the nervous energy of her frail body, harboring so strong and virile a soul.

"Because he is afraid his words might be doubted. He fears to be considered as a fortune-hunter when he is the lover; he does not want to buy a title when he has a heart to give for nothing."

Barton heaved a deep sigh. He felt that he had been worsted in the argument, that he had not changed in the least either Juliet's sentiments or determination, but this only strengthened his resolution to save Juliet in spite of herself. For the present he saw there was nothing else to be done, so he said:

"I see that you love him enough to commit even the folly of marrying him, but I will save you and must for the sake of my dead Marie. You shall not be sacrificed as she was."

"Don't try to save me, Uncle Sam, for I don't want to be saved. I love him and will only find happiness as his wife."

"That I won't promise, for I will and must try to save you. I owe it to you, who I love as a daughter, to myself and also to the friendship which once united me to your father."

They continued to speak for a few moments longer, then Barton toek his leave. He had failed in his object, but with his nature, so full of undaunted energy, failure only pushed him to greater efforts.

CHAPTER VI.

THE PRINCE.

When Juliet found herself alone after Barton's departure, a feeling of sorrow, of oppression, filled her very soul. Aimlessly she walked about the garden, unconscious of the objects which surrounded her, all her thoughts concentrated on the prince and the pitiful story Barton had told her of his father's first wife. Yes, she loved him with all the ardor of her deep nature, he had become the sun of her existence, without him all would be darkness and despair.

Yet, on the other hand, if her love was not returned, if, like his father had done before him, he was courting her for her millions! The thought made her shiver, but the next moment the doubt was banished; he loved her, she was sure of that love, everything told her of its sincerity and in the fullness of her heart she murmured:

"Oh, why are you a prince! Why can't you be like the little musician of long ago, whose only claim upon me was the tenderness of his eyes, the sweetness of his smile. Were you like him I would make you more than a prince, for you would become the king and master of my heart!"

She had reached the little gate while she spoke, and, leaning upon it, she soon lost herself in the sweetness of her dream. Suddenly the sound of footsteps down the almost deserted street caused her to turn and with a start and a blush she saw coming toward her the Prince del Capitolli himself.

He was a man of some twenty-five or thirty years of age, tall, slender, elegant in build. His face had the healthy pallor of the Southerner, the eyes were large, luminous and dreamy, somewhat melancholic in their expression, the fine oval of the face was brought out still more by the dark, pointed beard and the small, delicately-pencilled mustache. Everything about him betrayed the man of race, the smallness of the hands and feet, the refinement of the features.

When he caught sight of Juliet a glow of pleasure chased the gloom from his eye and it was with a finished grace that he raised his hat in salutation, saying as he paused before her:

"What a perfect evening we are enjoying."

Juliet controlled her emotion and replied in her usual tones, though her heart still quivered uneasily in her bosom.

"I see it has tempted you out for a walk. Will you come in?"

"No, thanks. I will not disturb your preparations for the evening, since I suppose you are to attend Mr. Taylor's ball?"

"Oh, yes, for I am to help Camilla receive."

For a few moments they were silent, then Juliet asked abruptly, following aloud the course of her thoughts:

"I have often wished to ask you if you play the violin? Most Italians are musicians, you know."

Prince del Capitolli gave a start and flashed toward her a quick, questioning look, then answered:

"I used to a little, but gradually abandoned it, not expecting to become an expert in that line. Why do you ask, Miss Bencroft?"

"Just a folish notion, perhaps, but this afternoon I was made to recall an incident of my childhood, and it has awakened in me the desire to hear some Italian music, such as your little street musicians play."

There was in the prince's voice a strange quiver of emotion, as he asked:

"Why that desire, Miss Bencroft? Has the incident of which you speak anything to do with a street musician?"

"You will task me with being very romantic," and Juliet laughed somewhat nervously, "but years ago there came to my house to play for me on stormy days a little dark-eyed son of Italy. He was so quiet and so sad, there was such beauty in his velvety black eyes, that the memory of his face has haunted me ever since, like the shadow of a half-forgotten dream."

Was it the shades of the coming twilight? Though it seemed to Juliet that the prince's face had turned a shade paler and that his voice had an unsteady ring as he asked:

"Would you remember him if chance should bring you face to face once more?"

"How could I? When I saw him last he could not have been more than twelve years of age; now he must be a man—nay, perhaps he died long ago, for when I last saw him he was pale and thin, with great, sad eyes which spoke fever."

"What makes you think of him today?"

Prince del Capitolli had the intention of lingering only a few minutes when he had accosted Juliet, but now he was no longer conscious of the flying minutes, so great was his interest and curiosity in what the young girl was telling him.

Juliet had a nervous laugh as she replied to his last question:

"I don't know—mind telegraphy, perhaps; but all day, in spite of what I could do, my mind has dwelt on the image of the child. You see he was my first lover, and I still recall the day when my governess was not looking that I gave him a ring, saying that with this he could come at any time and claim the beautiful princess as his bride. You see, I was still at the age when fairy tales were real and, of course, I always played the leading part."

"And he never returned?" Prince del Capitolli bent eagerly forward to catch her reply.

"No; as I told you before, I believe him to be dead, for that was our last meeting. When I again asked for Pieto to come and play for me he had disappeared from New York. Later, when I grew to maidenhood, I had inquiries made, but all to no avail. Pieto had completely disappeared from my life."

"Would you like to see him again, Miss Bencroft?"

"Oh, yes, not to carry out the childish contract, but to speak to him, to know his life, his hopes, success or failure, to console him if he is unhappy, to help him if he needs my help, in any case to offer him the assurance of my sincere friendship."

"How faithfully you have kept that memory!"

She looked up with a smile. "It is my nature to be faithful. There is much of the dog in my make-up."

His face lost some of its eager curiosity, and it was with assumed indifference that he put the question:

"So you would like to hear some Italian music? Why don't you call in the first little dago musician who haunts the streets of New York? Any one of them could satisfy your desire."

Juliet shook her head. "Pieto played a piece that I have never heard before nor since. No one seems to know it. No doubt it was original with the child, yet it had a sweetness and beauty which to my ears has never been equaled."

"Maybe it will be given you to hear it again some day," and the prince looked away that she might not see the light of stern resolution which had sprung into his eyes.

A young man was coming toward them. His face was bright and manly, though not handsome, but just now it was marred by an expression of anger and ill-humor. With his cane he knocked from the road the pebbles in his path and sent them dashing away in a gesture which bespoke the most unpleasant frame of mind. For the rest he was of medium height and of a build which promised embonpoint with age. The walk was brisk and businesslike, having nothing of the effeminate grace and ultra-elegance of the foreigners. When Prince del Capitolli saw him, he turned to Juliet, saying:

"Your brother is coming, so farewell until tonight," and, raising his hat, he walked hurriedly away.

Juliet looked after him with a puzzled expression on her face.

"How strange he was this evening! The glitter of his eye when I spoke of my little Italian of long ago, his sudden starts and flashes, why, even his abrupt departure just now! What can it mean?"

This exceedingly interesting story of the wooing of American girls by titled foreigners will be continued in the Ledger issue of next week, developing some very tragic and remarkable situations. It will richly repay the reader to follow the story to the end. All subscribers are still receiving our cameras and patterns free, as announced on pages thirteen and fifteen.

HOPELESS ANNETTA.

BY PAOLA HONVANI.

"To what purpose, Luigi, should we bind ourselves," said Annetta Lanza, "since you leave here tomorrow with the owner of the ship, who may trade from port to port for years without trying to return to Leghorn."

"Because I adore you, Annetta," replied the young sailor, "and I could not sleep if I thought there was a chance of your accepting another man as a lover."

"And suppose I promised to be your wife and married some one else, because you stayed away too long?" asked the girl.

"If you say you will let me become your husband when this voyage is over, I will trust you," he answered.

"I promise you, Luigi," she said. "Mind that you are as careful of this engagement as I shall be."

Annetta was not the only girl in Leghorn whom Luigi might have addressed in a similar strain, with the like result. The handsome young sailor, with his piercing black eyes, aquiline nose and delicately drawn mouth, whose smile displayed two rows of perfect teeth, was the idol of the peasant girls of Leghorn, and many a one gave Annette an evil look as they saw her affectionate parting from Luigi the next day.

But it was not an engagament for which Annetta needed to be much envied. Trading from port to port, getting rid of one cargo to take in another, and shaping his course according to the information that he might glean as to probable markets, the skipper knew no better than his crew when the voyage would be ended, and his little vessel would anchor once more in Leghorn.

Annetta would not be able to write to her lover while he was away, for the ship's course would depend upon circumstances which could be learned only when they arose. But she had made up her mind, and was determined to abide by the consequences. So Annetta gave her farewell kisses to Luigi and saw the Santa Teresa sail away with him, trusting that in time God would bring him back to her. She checked the tears which welled up to her eyes and went home to the little cottage rented by the old woman who had adopted her, for Annetta was an orphan, without a relative in all Italy.

Her life was an easy and simple one while her protectress lived, for the old lady had a small annuity, and in Italy a little money is enough to provide for two women. When it should please Heaven to take her second mother from her she would go back to Volterra, which was her native place, and work at the modeling of the alabaster that is found in its caverns, which had been her occupation before old Marta had come across her and brought her to Leghorn.

But Annetta was not the girl to anticipate trouble, so she thought nothing of how long old Marta would live; besides, just then she had her mind full of Luigi and his indefinite return from his uncertain cruising. Grief, however, if it need not be forestalled by anticipation, cannot be postponed by indifference.

Six months after Luigi had sailed Annetta found herself without a friend at Leghorn, and compelled to return to Volterra, to earn her living. The little that Marta had left behind her only sufficed for her funeral and for the cost of Annetta's journey to Volterra.

"Giulia," she said to one of her girl acquaintances, "I am leaving Leghorn tomorrow, and I have no means of telling Luigi Filippo where he will find me when he comes back."

"Ah, then Luigi is to marry you after his voyage?" asked Giulia.

"I have promised him," replied Annetta. "Give him this letter; it will tell him that good Donna Marta is in Heaven, and that I have gone back to Volterra to get my living with the alabaster at modeling."

Then Annetta handed her letter to Giulia, who promised to give it to Luigi when he returned to Leghorn.

* * * * * * *

Annetta had been back in Volterra two years, working at her old art, waiting for Luigi to come to her and claim the performance of her promise. She waited and worked, but Luigi did not appear. Her earnings were not large, but she had aptitude for her work, and the dealer who exported the alabaster productions which were the staple of Volterra, gave her constant employment. Thus, with her Italian thrift and simple life, she was able to put away a lira or so every week, to help her lover when he should set up housekeeping.

Time passed, but it did not bring Luigi to her.

One Sunday the priest of the little church that she attended announced a pilgrimage to Pisa. All those whose prayers had not been answered were advised to seek the intercession of the Madonna, whose seven-veiled portrait, styled Santa Maria sotto gli organi because it was originally placed on a pillar under the organ when it was hung in Pisa cathedral, was an object of great reverence. Annetta thought of her long absent lover, and told herself that all would be well if she knelt before the Madonna's portrait in Pisa cathedral and prayed for the return of Luigi; so, with her hoarded lira in her pocket, she betook herself, in company with two score other pilgrims, to the city of the leaning tower.

In such expeditions faith is generally at fever heat, and there was hardly a member of the little band who did not believe that the Madonna would answer the prayers made to her.

It seemed as if she had shown her first favors to Annetta, for as she, with fervid thoughts, passed out through the cathedral doors, she came almost into the arms of Luigi Filippo. At least into one of the arms of the handsome young sailor; the other gave support to Annetta's former acquaintance, Guilia.

"Annetta!" he exclaimed, "they told me that you were dead."

"Who told you so?" she asked. "I have been working in Volterra for three years, and no one there could have told you that I had died."

Giulia's cheeks betrayed more than her treachery; the glance which she gave Luigi suggested the motive of it.

Like most Italians of the lower classes, Annetta's nature was both passionate and deceptive, and it was when her anger was most strongly stirred that her duplicity enabled her to control and conceal it.

"And if chance had not brought you—you and Giulia to Pisa—you might have continued to think me dead; that is, if you did not cease to remember me."

She made no reference to the letter that she had left with Giulia.

But the latter had not been so false as Annetta supposed. A woman, also named Annetta, who had been employed at some alabaster works at Volterra, had died, and some one who had known her spoke of her death while he lounged about Leghorn, waiting for the steamer that should bear him thence.

So, when Luigi returned from his long voyage, people told him that Annetta was dead—he was already making love to Giulia, and the latter burned the letter of the supposed dead woman, that it might not revive a love which was also dead, and check the passion which the young sailor was just then expressing for herself.

Luigi had saved some money during his prolonged voyage, so when he found himself loving Giulia as he had formerly loved Annetta, he resolved to give up the sea and to expend his little hoard upon a farm, cultivating the land as his father had taught him when he was a lad. Thus he had come to Pisa, where his father had lived.

Annetta learned where Luigi and his wife were lodging, and then she bade them good-morning, and turned back into the cathedral to kneel once more beside picture of the Madonna with its seven veils. But this time her prayer was not for love, but for hate.

"Grant me," she implored, "grant me a vengeance for my wrongs. Let me punish this false woman who tells my lover that I am dead, and who keeps back the letter that I had written to him."

* * * * * * *

A month had passed, and Annetta had had no answer to her last prayers. Luigi had taken a little farm, and would have possession in the autumn after the vintage, and doubtless he and his young wife would be as happy as Annetta was wretched.

But early in August an epidemic raged in Tuscany, and Pisa had its share of the fever that attacked old and young, rich and poor, with grim equality. Not only was the disease virulent and deadly, but the want of nurses augmented the number of fatal cases. The doctors and priests alike appealed for help, and Annetta, whose little hoard was wasting during her life of idleness, volunteered to nurse the sick. "With such a good work," she thought, "I am bound to have my prayer granted to me."

She had no fear of catching the fever, for life was too bitter for her to give death any terrors. So she went from one patient to another, leaving them when they became convalescent, or when, alas! they died.

One morning, when she went for her orders, she received direction to go to Giulia Filippo, who was down with the fever. Luigi had been previously taken to the hospital, which was too full to receive his wife.

"Are my prayers to be answered?" thought Annetta. "Am I to see the death of the woman who has betrayed my life's happiness?"

She nursed her patient conscientiously, but every hour she was hoping to see signs of her dissolution.

At last the crisis came and passed. The doctor paid his morning visit, and repeated it later in the day, bringing with him a bottle of medicine.

"All depends upon the patient's sleeping," he explained. "If she does not quiet down by 8 o'clock, give her a quarter of this opiate, and, if necessary, repeat the dose six hours afterward. Be careful not to give her more than the quantity I have named, or the effect will be fatal."

Then he went away, and Annetta was alone with the sick woman.

"Then I have nursed her through her illness to restore her to Luigi," she thought. "The woman who has withheld my letter to my lover that she might supplant me in his heart."

She turned her back upon the sick woman, for she knew that her eyes would betray her anger.

Then she deliberately poured into a wine-glass half the contents of the bottle which the doctor had given to her.

"Annetta," said the patient, "if I should die, will you forgive me for my unfaithfulness to you? Indeed, they said that you had died, and as Luigi seemed to have ceased to care for you, I destroyed your letter, that it should not revive his love."

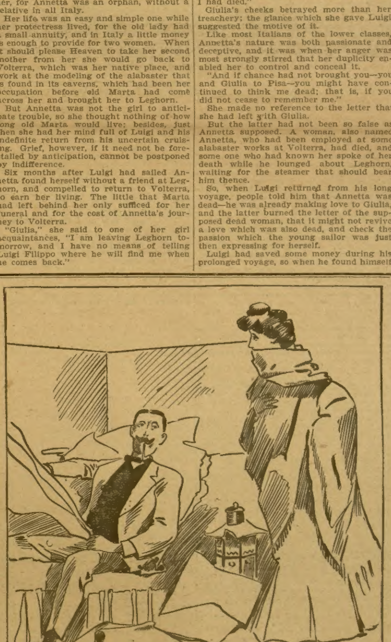
"Ah, well, sleep, my dear, and all will be right," said Annetta, soothingly.

Giulia hardly needed her nurse's instruction, for nature was bringing the rest that was to accomplish her recovery.

Annetta looked at her patient as she sank to slumber. "She has acted as most girls would have done, perhaps as I should have acted in her place," she thought. "Luigi had forgotten me, and accepted willingly any one's word that told him the welcome news that I was dead. It is such a good solution of a trouble, to kill the object of a passion already expired. Giulia will live; why should I not die? Santa Maria, pity me; pray for me."

Then she swallowed the opiate which she had poured out for her patient, and sank upon the couch on which she was to pass from life to death. When the doctor made his early call the next morning, Annetta had gone to her long sleep.

"We have lost a good nurse," he said; "it is fortunate that she lived long enough to preserve her patient."



Wife—George, are we going to Hushbury's dance or not? If we are, it is time for me to dress. If not, I must put a mustard plaster on my chest and go straight to bed.

Sensitive Englishman.

A bald-headed man entered a New York hotel and registered thus:

"Mc, London, England."

The clerk looked at the entry and politely asked him to write the rest of his name.

"That is all the name I have," said the guest.

The clerk looked at him dubiously for a moment, then thought he remembered his face.

"Haven't you been here before?"

"Yes," the guest answered; "I was here two years ago."

At his earliest leisure the clerk looked up the registry of two years ago, and found the following entry in the same handwriting:

"Harry McComb, Jr., M. P., London, England."

When next the guest came to the counter the clerk showed the old register to him.

"You wrote that, didn't you?"

"Yes," the guest admitted.

"And that was your name, wasn't it?"

"Yes."

"Then, why do you say that 'Mc' is your full name now?"

"Well, I'll tell you," said the guest. "You see, when I was here before I was a member of parliament, but I am not now, so have no right to use the 'M. P.' My father died a year ago, so, of course, I do not use the 'Jr.' any more. Then last fall I had a fever and all my hair fell out. So, being no longer 'Harry,' I have no use for the 'Comb,' and there you are. There's nothing left but 'Mc,' you see."

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"In time of war, prepare for lasting peace," is thoughtful Japan's motto.

From outside sources Russia is acquiring the impression that Japan is a billion dollar country.

There are just nine men in the President's Cabinet and they are playing the real national game.

The Sultan, it appears, was much frightened when that bomb burst, but he held himself well together.

One of the Missouri senators is innocent. That is, there was not enough evidence offered to convict him.

Addicks is defendant in a suit before the New York Supreme Court on a charge of fraud. Same Addicks.

Though the photographer may make a specialty of negatives, he seldom says "no" when asked to take something.

Probably the Japanese populace are under the impression that Secretary Taft is one of America's most distinguished wrestlers.

Grover Cleveland's income is only $5,000 a year, but as he can eke out the bill of fare with an occasional duck he gets along comfortably.

With a tombstone epitaph the trouble is that it comes too late in the game to enable a man to borrow money on the strength of it.

Portsmouth has not had so much excitement since the steam cars first supplanted the stagecoach line that used to pass through the town.

Governor Folk takes his whisky straight. Sure. A man has to have some of the commoner virtues along with the spectacular ones to be elected governor of Missouri.

Handicapped as they are by being called "the Senators," how could anybody expect the members of the Washington Baseball Club to put any ginger into their playing?

Yellow fever has tied up the telephone service around New Orleans. It is useless to assure people when they are in that frame of mind that it is impossible to catch the fever over the long-distance phone.

General Miles is traveling in Europe. That is doubtless what makes them so warlike at present over there. They have seen the General in his uniform and know that Sherman was wrong. War, they are persuaded, is a circus parade.

FORTUNE'S FREELANCE;

Or, LOVE AND HIDDEN SILVER

BY WILLIAM WALLACE COOK

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CHAPTER XI.

THE FIGHT ON THE LEDGE.

Wingate was not partial to the sword as a weapon, although he had been trained in its use by Leduc, of Paris, the best of modern masters. There was much good exercise in the broadsword, but for real work against odds there was nothing to compare with one of Colt's masterpieces.

Leduc had dispelled some of Wingate's illusions in the use of the blade. For instance, when outnumbered it is a fallacy to put your back to the wall; come out into the open where you will have free play for your lunges on every side. Place your trust in a quick eye, a steady head and alert limbs.

Wingate's point was in the air as the marksman's finger flexed on the trigger. The shimmering menace of the blade struck terror to the man's heart and one hesitating second caused his undoing.

The point fell and rose again, the steel reddened by half its length. A convulsive yell burst from the lips of the stricken man and woke some fearsome echoes from cliff to cliff; the revolver dropped from his nerveless hand, he tottered feebly on the stone brink and then sprawled his full weight on one of the climbers who was all but upon the ledge.

The under man went rolling backward. Wingate was too busily engaged to mark the distance of his fall.

Luis was upon the parapet, his eyes glinting savagely, his powerful body swift and certain in every movement. He had a rifle in his hands and Wingate made it his especial business to press him closely so that he could not make ready use of it.

Then Wingate paid his tribute to the unexpected. Quick as a tiger cat, Luis parried a slashing blow of the sword with the barrel of his gun.

Rust had weakened the Bocara steel. As it stuck fire from the barrel it snapped in half, and Wingate found himself armed with the useless stump of the blade.

A derisive laugh escaped Luis. He had already discovered that his enemy had no other weapon and fancied to have the remainder of the battle his own way. Remembrance of that other conflict in the gulch should have taught him better.

The renegade outweighed Wingate at least fifty pounds and was perfect master of his muscles. There was nothing logy, nothing awkward, in the handling of his limbs. Every action went home with clean cut certainty.

But he had not the baritsu tricks of the Japanese wrestlers, as Wingate had. Wingate had gathered them in on the road to Pekin, during the Boxer uprising—had absorbed everything else that might some day prove useful to him.

His arms came together like the jaws of a trap, Luis in between. The next instant Luis was on his back, on the smooth surface of the rock—yet not wholly at a disadvantage, for his right arm was about Wingate's neck and held to it with crushing power.

Wingate freed a hand, caught Luis' wrist and twisted it cruelly. The desperado winced and a groan of pain was wrenched from his lips, but the compressing arm did not relax by a hair's breadth.

At that instant, Wingate had a fleeting glimpse of Monica, cowering, frightened against the wall, clutching one of his heavy revolvers with both hands. She was not looking toward him, but was staring horror stricken across the ledge.

The second of the atacking trio—the man who had been buffeted down the cliffside by his falling comrade—had regained the ledge. His crooked elbow rested on the rock and his eye was gleaming along the barrel of a revolver, trimming the sights carefully so that Luis should not be harmed.

A report rang out. The man at the ledge slowly relinquished his weapon and sank from sight.

Wingate swerved his gaze to the girl. The long revolver lay at her feet, her face was in her hands and a little curl of smoke was dissipating slowly into thin air.

An oath broke from Luis. He staggered erect—a move Wingate was waiting for and assisted—and was presently lifted clear of his feet and hurled head-first to the rock.

All this had called for the last ounce of strength at Wingate's command. The effort required to throw his burly antagonist left him trembling and spent, and he sank to the ledge with a blur before his eyes and a great roaring in his ears.

The weakness passed as swiftly as it came. Monica was kneeling at his side, supporting his head in her arms.

"Tom, dear Tom!" whispered the girl. "It was terrible, but ah! it was nobly, nobly done."

He put up his hand and drew her face close to his, leaving a kiss on her soft cheek. Had Fate closed his account at that moment, she would have found him in her debt.

"It was a sharp skirmish, Miss Grayson," remarked Wingate, smiling faintly as he regained his feet.

"And were you not hurt? Not at all?"

The very tones of her voice sounded the depths of her feeling.

"Not at all, I assure you. I find that I have not the staying power that I had before that first meeting of mine with Luis and his friends."

"Were—were any of those men killed, Mr. Wingate?" faltered the girl.

"I think not, although it would have been a great gain for law and order if such a fate had overtaken them all."

Aunt Chloe, at this juncture, came weeping to the scene. Silence, bespeaking a cessation of hostilities, had lured her from her haven of refuge behind the walls.

"Hab we all been took pris'ners ag'in, honey?" she asked between her sterterous sobs. "Land ob mercy, chile, ain't we evah gwine tuh git shet ob dis gun-shootin' en rowdyin'? Ah's been a 'spectable Mefodis' all mah life, en now tuh hab dese disgraceful goin's on jes' erbout fills mah cup tuh runnin' ovah. Hit do, honey, hit do!"

Leaving the grief-stricken negress to the ministrations of her mistress, Wingate took his way back along the ledge to the place where the rope had been left. Returning with it, he relieved the unconscious Luis of a six-shooter he carried in his belt and bound his hands at his back.

The man would soon revive, and Wingate, desiring to leave and look after the other two, asked Monica to watch him. Investigation developed the fact that the murderous individual who had suffered the sword thrust had passed forever from the scene of his evil deeds; the other man was wounded in the shoulder and seemed too dazed to take advantage of his opportunity for flight.

Untying a large handkerchief from the fellow's neck Wingate bandaged the hurt; then plucked away his remaining revolver and ordered him up to the ledge.

Aunt Chloe, looking down off the gorge, had been wringing her hands and indulging in wild expressions of fear and excitement. Monica, although more calm, was quite as much alarmed as Aunt Chloe.

"More of the desperadoes are coming, Mr. Wingate," announced the girl.

"We all's gwine tuh be killed now fo' sho'!" mourned the old negress. "Jess out ob de fryin'-pan intuh de fiah, dat's all. Dese is tribulatious times en mighty tryin' tuh de sperit. Whut we gwine tuh do, Mis' Wingate, whut we gwine tuh do?"

Wingate sank to his knees and peered steadily at the black dots sweeping up the defile. There were six of them and they were coming at speed, evidently with a well-defined purpose in view.

"Behind the wall, Monica, you and Aunt Chloe!" ordered Wingate, picking up the rifle Luis had dropped.

"You cannot face all those men alone!" returned Monica.

Wingate had planted himself firmly on the ledge, rifle in hand and ready for a shot the moment the riders drew within easy range. Suddenly he lowered the gun and heaved a long breath of relief.

"Friends!" he exclaimed. "We have nothing to fear, Miss Grayson. Barry is one of the horsemen; I could pick out that big, awkward form of his among a thousand."

"But who are those with him?" inquired the girl.

"I can't tell as yet." He continued to watch. "Ah," he murmured finally, "I have it. Cameron is with Barry. Here's a stroke of luck, little girl!" And thereupon Wingate snatched off his hat and waved it to attract the attention of the men below.

CHAPTER XII.

BACK TO DELLPLAINE'S.

That Wingate was seen and recognized was proved by answering signals whose purport was unmistakable. The signals returned by the doctor were especially hearty and significant.

At the foot of the cliff the riders drew rein and all but one of them tumbled from their saddles. The man who kept his seat gathered in the reins of the other five, who lost no time in beginning the ascent.

Cameron was first to reach the cliff houses and extend a cordial hand to Wingate.

"Looks like you'd been having a time here," observed the sheriff, his eyes roaming from Luis to the man with the wounded shoulder. "Barry thinks these are the rascals I've been looking for during the past few weeks."

"That fellow"—Wingate indicated Luis—"was captain of the gang that held up the stage. The other man, and the one below, are part of his outfit."

"Hoop-a-la!" jubilated Cameron. "We've nailed some of the road agents, boys," he added to the three who now scrambled to the ledge with the doctor. "Put the cuffs on the big duffer, Haskins, and then take personal charge of him. Norton, you can look after the other man."

"You're all right, eh, Tom?" said Barry, puffing from the exertions called forth by his climb. "There was no earthly use for me to be in any kind of a taking about you—I might have known that. Miss Grayson," he added, turning to the girl, "you appear to have withstood the ordeal quite as well as Wingate."

"It was a frightful experience, doctor," answered Monica, "but Mr. Wingate saved the day for us."

"Then I'm glad he saved this day at a smaller price than saving the other cost him," answered Barry. "If this gang could have held out long enough, though, they'd have got him. Who is the large gentleman with the bad eyes, Tom?"

"Luis," replied Wingate.

"Well, well! I'm glad to see him with those come-alongs on. I met him at the foot of the gorge, quite unexpectedly. He was my mark when I fired those three shots, as agreed on. You would have been saved considerable trouble, I suppose, if those bullets had not gone wide."

"What happened to you, Barry? And where is Hamilton, and the wagon, and our riding horses?"

"Hamilton and I were neatly bagged," growled Barry. "Luis must have seen me on guard, for he smuggled himself to within a hundred feet and then rushed me."

"And you fired three times at him, at that range, and missed?"

"Did you ever hear me brag about being a good shot?" bristled the doctor. "Besides, I was surprised. When I got over the surprise I had ropes on me.

"While Luis was giving me his attention, three other ruffians who were with him had fallen upon Hamilton. In a little while they came down the gorge with the wagon and the two riding horses. I was loaded into the wagon alongside of Hamilton and a scoundrel who carried his arm in a sling was told off by Luis to drive away with us.

"An hour later we found ourselves surrounded by Cameron and his posse. The man with his arm in a sling was made a prisoner, Hamilton and I were released, and Hamilton is pointing his mules this way again. I jumped into your saddle, Tom, and galloped on ahead with the officers."

"You have a propensity, Cameron," smiled Wingate, "for showing up in the right place at the right time."

"Nothing providential about it, either," averred Cameron. "A dry-washer, from south of Dellplaine's, brought word to the Springs that a suspicious outfit had passed his camp, pushing north. That was my cue, for I still had the road agents in mind and was hot to get at them.

"They got to Dellplaine's two hours ahead of us, having halted there some little time to rest their mouths. Since sun-up, today, Dell has been keeping open house for more suspicious characters than were ever bunched on him before.

"A burro train pulled in from over Bull Mountain way, watered and started in the direction of Hink's Coulee. There were three with that layout, and Dell says that of all the roughs he ever set eyes on those three were entitled to first prize. They were law abiding enough at Dell's, paid him three dollars, Mex, for the water they had used, tightened their burro packs and slipped off into the desert.

"That was before these other fellows had arrived. I was at sixes and sevens which lot to follow, but decided to go after the men who were traveling light. Next thing that happened, we found the doctor and Hamilton."

Cameron swept his gaze over Luis and the other prisoner and gave vent to a chuckle.

"I hear the soldiers over on the Reserve," he went on, "are out looking for these handy boys. It's worth a whole lot to me to cut the military out of a capture. I'm under obligations to you, Wingate."

Barry, who had been treating the shoulder of the wounded renegade, drew Wingate apart, at this point.

"It wasn't here, was it?" he remarked, with mysterious assurance.

"Well," replied Wingate, "the silver was here but it isn't here now."

"What has become of it?" queried the doctor, mildly excited.

"The man who stole the chart came here and took away every dollar of the money."

"How do you know?"

"Come with me and you can see for yourself," said Wingate, thinking this the best way to combat his friend's incredulity.

When the doctor returned from his trip to the cache, he was deeply impressed. He and Wingate agreed between them that it was just as well to keep everything concerning the treasure a secret from the sheriff and his men.

Barry passed the word to Miss Grayson, and she in turn warned Aunt Chloe. Luis could have complicated the situation had he been so minded, but he had sunk into a taciturn mood and seemingly desired only to be let alone.

Hamilton arrived with the wagon. The prisoner he brought with him proved to be none other than Murdoch.

A consultation was held and it was decided best to pass the night in the gulch. It would have been possible to return to Dellplaine's, but, after such a trying day, and inasmuch as plenty of food and forage were at hand, a fifteen-mile trip through the desert was regarded as inadvisable.

A shallow grave was scooped out in the sand and the dead renegade was covered from the sight of honest men. Barry made a written statement concerning the wound that had caused his taking off, and other statements, given by Wingate, Miss Grayson and Aunt Chloe, were duly recorded by the sheriff and witnessed by the posse. Thus the sanguinary incident was closed.

Wingate had no sentiment to waste on the deed. What he had done was entirely in self defense, and but for his quickness he and not the desperado would be lying under that bleak mound in the desert.

Monica and Aunt Chloe slept in the wagon, the men contenting themselves with the ground, using their saddles for pillows. Watch was kept over the prisoners, the officers standing guard, turn about.

The night passed safely, and, after an early breakfast, the return journey was begun. The prisoners were mounted on their own horses, which the sheriff's men had caught up, the doctor appropriating the animal which had become ownerless as a result of the fight on the ledge.

Monica resumed her own mount, while Aunt Chloe returned to the wagon and rode with Hamilton. Thus the cavalcade issued from Canon del Muerto and, in due course, arrived at Dellplaine's.

After they had turned out at the rancher's, and while they were waiting for Mrs. Dellplaine to announce dinner, several of the ninos came dancing to the place where the travels were talking with the owner of the oasis. Three of the youngsters had bright silver coins in their hands and were exultantly holding them aloft.

"What, more?" cried Dellplaine. "Bravo, little ones!" He turned to the sheriff, Wingate and Barry. "What do you think? The dry-washers get gold out of the desert, but the ninos are getting silver, Mexican silver—dollars, amigos!"

Barry telegraphed an excited question to Wingate. The latter, scarcely less startled, took one of the silver pieces and examined it critically.

"Where did you find the money, my lad?" Wingate inquired as he handed the coin back.

"Along the trail leading to Hink's Coulee, Senor."

"How many dollars have you found?"

"Seven."

"And when did you begin finding them?"

"Since the middle of the forenoon," answered Dellplaine, his curiosity aroused by the questioning.

"The burro train that was here yesterday started off along Hink's Coulee trail?" continued Wingate.

"Yes. Do you think——"

"A word with you, Cameron," said Wingate, turning away. "Come on, Barry," he added, "you're concerned in this."

When they were at a distance from the others, Wingate proceeded in a low tone:

"Cameron, you and I and Barry—if he can stand such a long trip in the saddle—must overhaul that pack-train."

"What's wrong with it?"

"Well, the burros are packed with Mexican dollars——"

"What!" cried the astounded sheriff.

"And the dollars have been stolen," finished Wingate. "As sheriff, you want to get hold of the thieves; as friends of the owner of the money, Barry and I want to recover it."

"That sounds kind of fishy, Wingate——"

"If you feel that way, Cameron, it lets you out," said Wingate, sharply.

"Hold up, now! I don't want to be let out. I'll go with you, of course, but I'll first have to arrange with my posse to take the prisoners on to the Surings. But just a word: Who owns this money?"

Miss Grayson."

Cameron gave a long whistle.

"So that's her business in this part of the country, eh?" he muttered. "It's bothered me a considerable."

"If you care to," said Wingate, "we'll talk this over on the road. We'll have to hurry."

"Will three of us be enough?" asked Cameron, warily.

"I understood you to say that there were only three with the train."

"I have Dellplaine's word for it."

"His word is good enough for me. Will you go, Barry?"

"Go?" echoed the doctor. "Of course I'll go. I am determined to have a hand in the next bit of trouble you get into. But how about dinner? Mrs. Dell is just calling to us that it's ready."

"Wel'll bolt the meal," answered Wingate, after a moment's thought. "Meanwhile, Cameron, have one of your men get our horses under saddle."

"Keno!" Cameron called back as he hustled away.

"More luck!" muttered Wingate jubilantly, starting for the house with Barry.

"You're sure we're on the right track, Tom?" asked the doctor.

"As sure as a man can be of anything, in this life. One of the three men with that pack-train is O'Donnell."

"He has a good long start of us," observed Barry, doubtfully.

"Granted; but the train will travel slowly."

"O'Donnell may not keep to the Hink's Coulee trail very long."

"We're following a trail of silver dollars, Barry. Unless O'Donnell discovers that leak in one of the packs, and patches it up, we'll beat him in this little game of hare and hounds."

CHAPTER XIII.

THE SILVER TRAIL.

Wingate had settled it, in his own mind, that Miss Grayson was not to take part in the pursuit of the pack-train. It would be a hard ride, and quirt and spur must be freely used if success was won. He would spare her this, he thought, and she would remain at Dellplaine's entirely satisfied that her interests were being jealously guarded.

Three horses were waiting at Dell's door before Wingate, Barry and Cameron had finished their hurried meal. From her seat at the table, Monica could see the mounts through a window.

She recognized one of the horses as the "buckskin" which Wingate had ridden since leaving the Springs. She flashed a look of inquiry at Wingate, and when he rose and left the room, she followed.

"Are you going to ride on ahead of the rest of us, Mr. Wingate?" Monica asked. "Your party appears to be select—I see that my horse is not with these."

"We are not riding to the Springs, Miss Grayson," he answered, "but in pursuit of the pack-train that passed here yesterday morning."

"Why are you pursuing the pack-train?"

"Unless I am greatly mistaken, O'Donnell has charge of the train."

"And you think he has my uncle's money?"

"What other inference are we to draw?"

She seemed puzzled, and he explained about the finding of the Mexican coins by the children at the ranch. Her eyes brightened as he proceeded and, when he had finished, she clapped her hands.

"This comes of having such an able lieutenant as I have in you, Mr. Wingate," said she. "I wonder we did not think of this pack-train, and all it might signify, before."

"I was particularly dense on that point," said Wingate, ruefully. "I admit it now, after much valuable time has been lost."

"You do not intend taking me with you?" she queried, with a faint smile.

"It is unnecessary to subject you to further hardships and danger. I thought you would be willing to remain here until we get back."

She said nothing to this, and just then Cameron and Barry issued from the house, the former carrying a haversack of rations. Canteens of water were already swinging from the saddle-horns.

"Good-by, caballeros!" cried the girl, her eyes dancing as she watched the three men climb to their horses. "Naturally, I wish you the utmost success."

"We'll find out exactly what those burro packs contain, Miss Grayson," replied the doctor, securing his medicine case to the cantle; "you may rest easy on that point."

Their spurs rattled, and they were off. As they galloped into the desert, Wingate turned to wave a parting salute—but Monica had vanished.

The Coulee trail was little used, and, consequently, was but dimly marked. It led southwestward and, if followed to its farther end, would give upon the bare little valley where a meager colony of dry-washers was at work.

"Dry-washing" is a sine qua non where gold hides in the sand and no water is to be had. The detritus bearing the yellow metal is shoveled into a wooden machine which separates the valuable from the worthless dust by a process more or less intricate.

The tracks of the burros, although thirty hours old and at the mercy of sand-laden desert winds, were still plain to be seen. A mile from Dellplaine's, Cameron picked up the first dollar.

From that on, at irregular intervals, sometimes a mile apart and sometimes half that distance, a stray coin sparkled in the sun and bore mute evidence against the pilferers.

"Where is the nearest water, Cameron?" Barry asked.

"There is a limited supply at the Coulee," the sheriff answered. "The train may change its course and make for Seminole Flats. There are water holes there, but they may be dry."

"How far is it to the Flats?"

"Twenty miles."

Shortly after the fifth dollar was picked up, a surprising thing happened. The burro tracks, so clearly defined up to now, suddenly and completely faded from the trail. Nor were there any marks to right or left of the trail that suggested a turning out.

"That pack-train couldn't have gone up in smoke," splurged the impatient Barry. "What happened to it, anyhow? You are supposed to be a sleuth, Cameron—answer that."

Another coin was found, squarely within the trail, but with no trace of the train to suggest how it came there.

"This O'Donnell is up to his tricks," laughed Cameron. "He and his men have blanketed the burros' feet. The packs are not heavy and the muffled hoofs do not sink into the sand."

The pursuers were bothered and a vexatious delay was caused several miles farther along the trail. Here the dim road wound through a series of sand hillocks, or dunes, and never a telltale coin could be discovered.

This meant one of two things: Either the leak in the burro pack had been found and remedied, or else O'Donnell had left the Coulee trail.

An hour was lost in a tiresome hunt through the dunes, during which the pursuers scattered widely in order to cover the most ground.

Barry achieved the honor of picking up the trail. He fired a signal shot, as had been arranged, and Wingate and Cameron hurried to join him.

What the doctor had discovered was the lone print of a burro's hoof—a mark so small it was a wonder his eye ever found it.

"We're all right," exulted Cameron. "A hoof of one of the burros has slipped its padding. O'Donnell has left the Coulee trail and is heading straight for the Flats. He's for Mexico direct, and I'll gamble on it."

The sheriff took the lead, keenly search- Presently he gave a shout and gathered in another of the dollars.

Assurance having been doubly sure, all three of the pursuers felt in better spirits. Dusk found them in the rough country bordering upon Squaw Creek, three or four miles from the Flats.

The thickening shadows, of course, rendered it impossible to take note of any signs left by the pack train. Confident that O'Donnell had not avoided the Flats, and that his slow moving train could not have gone far beyond that place, the pursuers laid a straight course in that direction.

A bend in the creek brought the riders into a scanty fringe of cottonwoods.

Through the ghostly tree branches four or five lights burst out of the gloom on the opposite side of the dry watercourse.

Wingate was on the point of making some remark concerning the lights, when Cameron pulled his horse back with a sweep of the lines.

"Sh-h-h!" hissed the officer, warningly. "We're being followed. I've heard hoofs behind us for some time, but thought it might be a trick of my imagination. It wasn't, though. Listen!"

All three bent their heads. Wingate could hear distinctly the slow galloping of a horse, steadily increasing in volume.

Pulling their mounts farther back under cover of the trees, they waited.

"Only one!" whispered Cameron. "There! Do you see him?"

A moving blur, a shade blacker than the surrounding darkness, appeared in the distance.

"Halt the fellow and make him give an account of himself," growled the doctor.

The rider came close and would have passed within a horse's length of Wingate, but he spurred forward and blocked the way. The galloping horse snorted, and reared backward; Wingate leaned from his saddle and caught the bits.

"Halt!" he called sternly. "Who are you, and why have you been following us?"

Cameron and Barry rode hastily up on either side of the stranger.

"Don't try to shoot," threatened Cameron. "We have you covered."

"Is that you, Mr. Wingate?" came a woman's voice.

Wingate nearly pitched from the saddle.

"Miss Grayson!" he cried. "What in the world——"

Words failed him. Instinctively releasing his hold on the bits, he drew back and stared at the girlish figure, which he was now able to resolve into its due proportions.

Barry said something under his breath. If Cameron had any remarks to make he made them to himself.

"I thought you were looking for the pack-train, Mr. Wingate," said the girl.

"Why, yes, of course," returned the dazed Wingate. "Seminole Flats lie just ahead, and the train is there."

"You think it is there, but it isn't. The men with the train went into camp a mile or two back, along the creek. In following you I learned that much—purely by accident."

"You—you followed us from Dellplaine's?" spoke up Barry.

"Yes. If you had given a tenth part of the attention to the trail behind you that you did to the country ahead, you could hardly have failed to discover me. This is my work you are doing, gentlemen, and it is my duty to share the danger with you. Rather than argue that point when you were in a hurry to be on the road, I decided to let you go and then take horse and follow."

This bit of caprice, as the results of it dawned on him, inspired Wingate with feelings of admiration and delight. All responsibility for her share in the pursuit of the pack-train Monica had taken upon herself.

And she, by her own efforts, had accomplished a point that was the very bone and marrow of the expedition, namely, locating the train—and after it had escaped the vigilance of her three aides.

"You're sure you're not mistaken, Miss Grayson?" queried Cameron, slow to credit the girl with such a piece of strategy.

"I am very positive, Mr. Cameron," she answered. "However, I can take you to the place very easily and you can satisfy yourself."

This was the one thing to be done, under the circumstances, and Monica turned her horse and led the way.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE TRAPPERS TRAPPED.

As they rode, Monica described the manner in which she had discovered the whereabouts of the pack-train.

By galloping fast along the Coulee trail, she had come within sight of her three friends among the sand dunes; and she had continued to keep them in sight until the falling dusk rendered this impracticable. Dismay and confusion assailed her when she found that those she was following had vanished.

A tinkling bell drew her attention. Although faint, it was unmistakable, and came from the right of the course she was following.

Heading her horse in the direction of the sound, she mounted a rise that overlooked the creek-bed. A flaring torch struck on her eyes; in the light of it she saw a man watering a number of pack animals at a water-hole.

Held to the scene by a weird fascination, she watched until the train had filed away in the train of the bell-burro. The animals passed through what appeared like a crevice in the sheer face of the hills, the man with the torch being last to vanish.

Here was the pack-train, the girl told herself, but where were Mr. Wingate and his companions? An unreasoning fear seized her and she whipped her tired horse into a fierce gallop, and her relief was complete when she heard Wingate's voice and realized that she was with her friends.

"You have done very well indeed, Miss Grayson," said Wingate. "The tinkle of that bell was your opportunity, and you had the courage to improve it."

"Hardly the courage," Monica answered, with a nervous laugh. "It was fear that drove me in the direction of that sounding bell. The desert and these barren hills are lonely enough under the daylight, but to be adrift in them, all by yourself, and in the darkness——"

Her voice shivered into silence and she swerved her horse closer to Wingate's. In due course they topped the rise overlooking Squaw Creek.

Monica had not been able to lead them to the exact spot where she secured her view of the pack-train, but they descended to the bed of the stream and searched until they found the water-hole. With this for a guide, the girl proceeded to the narrow opening where the train, and the man in charge of it, had disappeared.

"Jupiter!" murmured Cameron with deep satisfaction. "I know this place, and we've got the whole outfit dead to rights."

"How can you tell that?" answered the doctor, "until we push through that passage and investigate the situation on the other side of it?"

"No need of pushing through, Doc. The train and the three men with it are in a cul-de-sac. There's only one way to get in or out, and that's through the passage.

"I know what I'm talking about. A good many years ago a vigilance committee rounded up half a dozen horse thieves in this very place. It's a good place to hide, but the worst kind of a hole to get trapped in. The horse thieves got trapped. I was one of the vigilance committee and we went into camp here and starved the thieves out. In the end, they decorated those cottonwoods at the bend of the creek.

"Now, we can trap these thieves just as we trapped those others. We'll hobble our horses down at the water-hole where they can drink when they're a mind to, and graze on the mesquite beans that are fairly thick around here. Then we'll come back and get behind the rocks.

"O'Donnell won't bring out the train till morning. When he and his two helpers show themselves, each of us will pick a man and cover him. That's about all. After we do that, we'll take charge of the train ourselves and head it back to Dellplaine's."

This plan had a feasible look to it and was decided upon. Bridle and reins were unbuckled and used for binding the fore feet of the horses, after which they were turned out close to the water and the mesquite bushes.

Wingate selected a refuge for Monica behind a large boulder, far enough from the mouth of the passage to insure her safety in the event of a skirmish. Two saddle blankets formed a couch and two more a covering.

"There you are," laughed Wingate, conducting the girl to the place prepared for her. "You will not be very comfortable, Miss Grayson, but you will be safe—I shall not be far away."

He would have left, but she stayed him with her hand.

"You are not angry with me for coming?" she asked, softly.

"Bless your heart, no! It is a capital thing you did come, for otherwise we might now be looking for this pack-train somewhere the other side of Seminole Flats."

She was silent for a space, still clinging to his arm. The moon, a laggard this night, had just shown itself over the rim of hills.

Monica's face was quite plain in the yellow light. The small sombrero she wore was pushed back on her dark hair and her look was grave and earnest.

Barry had gone into retirement behind a breastwork of his own, closer to the mouth of the passage, and Cameron was on watch gack of another boulder.

"Perhaps," said Monica, "my uncle's treasure may not be in that pack-train, after all."

"There is small doubt, in my own mind, that your silver is there, Miss Grayson," he answered, reassuringly.

"I have cared less about that silver, since our visit to the cliff houses," she went on. "If you are wrong, and I am disappointed again, I shall not have so many regrets as I had in that rocky chamber in the cliff."

Her voice had sunk to a tender undertone, and her eyes were full on Wingate's face. He could not grasp the purport of her words, but the way they were spoken aroused the passion in his heart.

"Why will your sorrow not be so keen if you are disappointed again?" he asked.

"Because," she answered, "I found something in those old cliff dwellings infinitely more precious than silver or gold—something that belongs to me." He started impulsively but she put him away with her hand. "Good-night, Mr. Wingate."

He hesitated an instant. "Good-night, Miss Grayson," he replied, and took himself off toward the passage.

Flinging himself down with his saddle for a pillow, he tried to sleep, but without success. Thoughts such as had never occurred to him before, trooped through his brain.

He reviewed his life, and was dissatisfied with the retrospect. His talk with Barry recurred to him. Had this discontent sprung from that?

Cameron called him to bear his share of guard duty. He watched for several hours and then aroused Barry.

The doctor pulled a flask from his pocket and unscrewed the top.

"It was full when we pulled out of the Springs," said he, "and this is the first time I have sampled it. Try a nip, Tom."

"No, thank you, old man," Wingate answered. "That stuff never was much in my line."

"Nor in mine, either, but it's good to have along in case of snake-bite. For medical purposes only." He took a deep draught. "I'm not used to sleeping out and it drives off the chill."

After replacing the flask in his pocket, he took his medicine case and his Winchester and started for the cleft in the hills.

"You won't need that case," said Wingate.

"It's a borrowed case, and I'm taking no chances with it. You lost one for me, and another went up in smoke with the rest of my furniture and fixtures. This belongs to a brother physician and I shall guard it as the apple of my eye.

So the case went with him. Still Wingate's sleeplessness continued.

From his bed on the ground he watched the stars wane, and then almost counted the minutes until a streak of dawn appeared over the tops of the eastern hills. Cameron looked around the boulder.

"Here," said he, handing Wingate four or five bacon sandwiches, "fortify yourself

(Continued on page eleven.)

Was Counted Out.

A London paper tells a story of life in Whitechapel. A man met a friend outside a public house.

"These men in here!" he exclaimed, furiously, pointing behind him, "have gone and insulted me. Now just watch me go in and kick them all into the street, one after another. You can count 'em off as they come through the door."

The friend stood and watched. Presently a human form whizzed by him.

"One!" he yelled.

"Stop counting," said the other, "it's me."

The Creditors' Loss.

A famous Irish lawyer, who was always poor, despite his success at the bar, once took Chief Justice Whiteside to see his new house in Dublin. It was palatial and magnificently furnished.

"Don't you think," he said, with a complacent look about, "that I deserve great credit for this?"

"Yes," the judge answered, dryly, "and you appear to have got it."

Mamma Tends It.

"Can any of you tell why the three good men were not burned when they walked into the furnace?" asked the Sunday school teacher.

"Yes'm, I c'n tell."

"All right, you may tell us the reason."

"Because the king's wife was looking after the furnace."

With the Hasbeens.

TOKYO, June 17.—Admiral Rojestvensky can make a fortune and if he wishes he need never return to Russia, where no doubt he would be compelled to face a board of inquiry. A local vaudeville manager has offered him an engagement at $2,000 a week.

P. S.—His last engagement was a failure, but it wasn't in vaudeville.

An Office Call.

Teacher—Tommy, something has got to be done about your behavior. I think today after school I shall call and see your father.

Tommy—It'll cost you two dollars if you do. Pop's a doctor; office hours, five to seven.—Puck.

The Easier Way.

Travers—I hear you are lecturing on the strenuous life.

Palavers—Yes. I got tired of hustling, and it's so much easier to tell other people what to do than it is to do things one's self.

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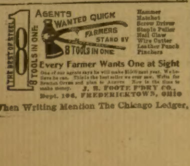
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Perfectly Clear.

Visiting Tourist (to rural inhabitant)—Are you a native of this place?

Inhabitant—Am I what?

Tourist—Are you a native?

Inhabitant's Wife (appearing on the scene)—Ain't ye got no sense, Rube? He means wuz ye livin' here when ye wuz born or wuz ye born before ye began livin' here?

Knew His Business.

"Did she ever permit you to kiss her?"

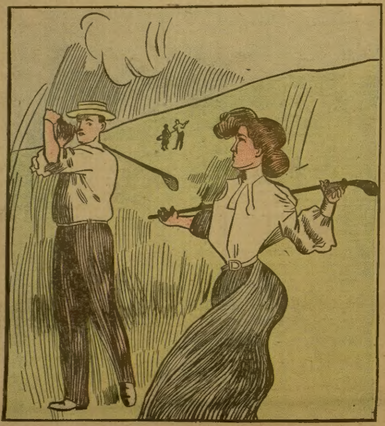
"No, indeed; she's not that kind of a girl."

"Then you have never kissed her?"

"Of course I have kissed her."

"But if she never permitted——"

"Bah! the man who waits for permission to kiss a girl doesn't deserve to kiss her, and she generally sees that he doesn't."



She—Cholly Fiddleback went down to the shore the other day and got way in beyond his depth.

He—Surf, or girl?

A Regular.

"How long has that new man been working here?" the superintendent asked.

"About two months," replied the foreman.

"Is he regular in his habits?"

"Oh, yes, he's regular enough. But they are all bad habits."

With a "Testimonial."

"You ought to know that man. His picture is in hundreds if newspapers every day."

"Is that so? What cured him?"

Leaves the Holes.

The Gourmet—I tell you, I certainly like those Swiss cheese sandwiches.

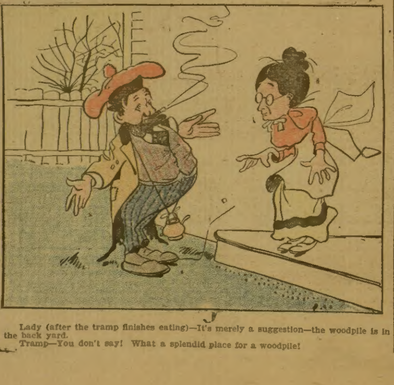
The Dyspeptic—Oh! That's the kind with the holes in it. Very indigestible.

The Gourmet—They are, eh? Well, I don't eat them.

On the Run.

She ran into town for the day,
But isn't it funny?
An hour was all she could stay—
She ran out of money.

THE REASON.



Lady (after the tramp finishes eating)—It's merely a suggestion—the woodpile is in the back yard.

Tramp—You don't say! What a splendid place for a woodpile!

OUST THE DEMON

A Tussle with Coffee.

There is something fairly demoniacal in the way coffee sometimes wreaks its fiendish malice on those who use it.

A lady writing from Calif. says:—

"My husband and I, both lovers of coffee, suffered for some time from a very annoying form of nervousness, accompanied by most frightful headaches. In my own case there was eventually developed some sort of affection of the nerves leading from the spine to the head.

"I was unable to hold my head up straight, the tension of the nerves drew it to one side, causing me the most intense pain. We got no relief from medicine, and were puzzled as to what caused the trouble, till a friend suggested that possibly the coffee we drank had something to do with it, and advised that we quit it and try Postum Coffee.

"We followed his advice, and from the day that we began to use Postum we both began to improve, and in a very short time both of us were entirely relieved. The nerves became steady once more, the headaches ceased, the muscles in the back of my neck relaxed, my head straightened up and the dreadful pain that had so punished me while I used the old kind of coffee vanished.

"We have never resumed the use of the old coffee, but relish our Postum every day as well as we did the former beverage. And we are delighted to find that we can give it freely to our children also, something we never dared to do with the old kind of coffee." Name given by Postum Co., Battle Creek, Mich.

Postum Coffee contains absolutely no drugs of any kind, but relieves the coffee drinker from the old drug poison.

There's a reason.

Well Meant.

"My husband is so poetic," said a well-dressed woman to her seat companion in the street car the other afternoon.

'Have you ever tried rubbin' his j'ints with hartshorn liniment, mum?" interrupted a stolid-looking woman with a market basket at her feet, who overheard the remark. "That'll straighten him out as quick as anything I know of, if he ain't got it too bad."

Not Negotiable.

"Do you ever look back, Blobbs, on the days of your boyhood, the dear faces in the home, the moon shining on the river, the hill, the valleys, the——"

"No," interrupted Blobbs, brusquely, "it don't pay."

"Doesn't pay what?"

"Dividends."

Wrong Diagnosis.

Patience—He really must have a soft spot in his heart for me.

May—How do you know that?

Patience—He says he is always thinking of me.

May—But you know a man doesn't think with his heart. The soft place must be in his head.

Just a Little Slap.

Tess—I thought you weren't going to send Marie MacInnes an invitation to your tea?

Jess—Oh! I decided that I couldn't hurt her feelings that much.

Tess—So you sent her one?

Jess—Yes, but I addressed it to "Miss Mary McGinnis."

His New Horse.

"Seen Ezry's new horse?" asked one citizen of another.

"I have," was the reply.

"Well, what does it look like?" asked the questioner impatiently.

"Well, he looks," said the other man slowly, "as if Ezry had taken him for an old debt."

Pretty Near.

"Have you ever had a 5-cent cigar named for you?"

"No, but I've been one of one hundred honorary vice-presidents of a political meeting."

Wouldn't Do.

"Rolling pin? Yes, sir; here's one made of glass; the latest thing out."

"But, good Lord, man! that thing would probably break and cut my head all to pieces!"

Facts About Cancer.

A new booklet published at considerable expense by L. T. Leach, M. D., of Indianapolis, Ind., tells the cause of Cancer and instructs in the care of the patient. Tells what to do in case of bleeding pain, odor, etc., and is a valuable guide in the management of any case. It advises the best method of treatment, and the reasons why. In short, it is a book that you will value for its information. It will be sent by mail, prepaid, on receipt of ten cents, stamps or coin.

JOLLITY

A Wonderful Medicine.

If you read this paper you know about Drake's Palmetto Wine for the Stomach, Flatulency and Constipation. We continually praise it, as hundreds of our readers do. Any reader of this paper can have a test bottle of Drake's Palmetto Wine free, by sending a letter or postal card to The Drake Co., Drake Bldg., Chicago, Ill.

One dose a day of this tonic, laxative Palmetto medicine, gives immediate relief and often cures in a few days. Drake's Palmetto Wine is pleasant to take and is a wonder worker for the Blood, Liver and Kidneys.

Seventy-five cents at drug stores for a large bottle, usual dollar size, but a trial bottle will be sent free and prepaid to every reader of this paper who writes for it.

She Is full of Blood.

Not long ago a German gardener, who lives a couple of miles south of the city, bought a cow which, the seller told him, was a full-blooded Jersey. Last week the cow strayed away from her owner's pasture and was lost. The next day the following sign was nailed to a tree near the gardener's home:

"Lost—From the basture avay. Vun Chersey cow, full of blood. Revart shall be baid. Fritz."

A Dainty Little Maid.

She is dressed in pretty colors and changes the color of her skirt when it is going to rain without any one's help. She indicates when it is wise to take your umbrella with you, when you can leave it at home. In fact she is the simplest and best barometer made. She is an ornament to any parlor and a necessity to every home. She or one of her sisters will come to you with full instructions on how she reads the weather, postpaid, for only 10 cents. She makes big money for her agents. Address W. P. Randolph & Co., 82 Dearborn St., Chicago.

A Prejudiced Mother.

Congressman Livingston, of Georgia, tells this story of his boy George:

"One day I said to him, 'Mamma says you've been very naughty today, sir; what's the matter?' 'Pop,' he replied, seriously, 'I think ma's prejudiced against me. Yesterday she told Aunt Sarah I was just the image of you.'"

Ladies, Preserve Your Youthful Appearance.

Madame Mignette's Beauty Cream and Skin Food removes every defect, spot, freckle, pimple, blemish or wrinkle, leaving the skin soft, clear and smooth. It is perfactly harmless and will not injure the most delicate skin. It preserves and brings back the youthful glow to the face and ruddiness to the cheeks, preserving it in this condition until extreme old age. This preparation has been used for years and hundreds are now using it and are more than delighted with the results.

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The Diplomatic Husband.

A man doesn't have to be married more than two years before he learns that, when his wife asks him if he doesn't think another woman is pretty, it isn't well for him to be more enthusiastic than to say: "Oh, so-so!"

A Possible Need.

"I have a new scheme in the insurance line."

"What is it?"

"I'd organize a company to insure insurance companies against their directors."

Some men think without talking and some talk without thinking.

Not So Bad as He Feared.

"George!"

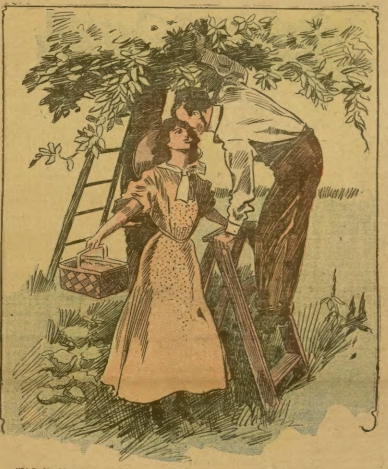
"Yes, dear?"

"Before we were married, you once asked me if I enjoyed a brass band.

"Y—yes, perhaps I did."

"You did. And I said yes; but it seems I misunderstood you, George. My wedding ring is making a black mark on my finger."

PICKING APPLES.



"If I should attempt to kiss you, would you scream for your mother?"

"I guess I would, but it wouldn't do me much good. Mother is visiting fifteen miles out in the country."

A moment later something happened.

Still Worse.

The anger of a woman scorned
  Can ne'er be half way rated
With hers who finds her Paris gown
  Is widely duplicated.

Of Course.

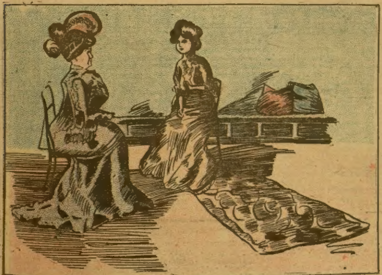
We always have some great expense
  That almost makes us sick;
Coal burned too fast awhile ago,
  Now ice melts up too quick.

The Tramp's Mistake.

"But a man last week told me exactly the same story."

Tramp—Yes, lady. Yer see, I made a fatal mistake in not havin' the history of me life copyrighted.

SUCH A FOOLISH QUESTION!



Mrs. Neurich—My husband bought a lovely ocean landscape yesterday.
Mrs. Neighbors—Indeed! Is it an oil or water color?
Mrs. Neurich—Water, of course. Didn't I just say it was an ocean landscape?

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Phrases.

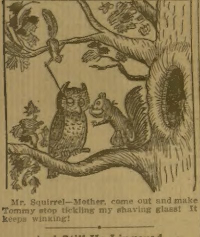
"Disturbing the piece."

Reggy (puffing)—Aw—you won't allow a chap who smokes cigarettes to kiss you?

Katharine—No, indeed.

Reggy—Ah—er—I s'pose you're afraid that the next chap that kissed you might detect it.

Annoying.



Mr. Squirrel—Mother, come out and make Tommy stop tickling my shaving glass! It keeps winking!

And Still He Lingered.

Mr. Stoplate—Yes, I played on our college nine and made many a home run.

Miss Sickofit—Oh, how I should like to see you make one!

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HER ANGEL FACE;

Or, The Story of Felicia = = = = By Emma Howard Wight.

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CHAPTER VI.

Walter Orme and Louise Ambersley were married a month after the death of old Mr. Orme. Walter had been in a very nervous and depressed condition ever since his father's sudden death. The doctor had recommended entire change of scene. Walter Orme had urged Louise to become his wife and let the trip be their wedding tour. She had consented, and they were very quietly married.

Upon the afternoon of the day of the wedding Dr. Carter, a little paler and graver than usual, started for the jail infirmary where for the past month he had been in attendance upon James Jones. The doctor had grown to take a great deal of interest in his patient. He found Jones to be a man of education and he felt sure that he had once been a gentleman.

"So you think that I shall cheat the gallows after all, doctor?" and the hollow, sunken eyes looked up, half wistfully, half satirically, into Dr. Carter's face as the latter sat down beside the narrow bed.

"You are a very ill man," was the reply. "And I think you know as well as I that you have no chance for recovery."

"Well," said the sick man, after a moment's silence, "I certainly prefer to die in my bed to being ignominiously hustled out of the world by the way of the hangman's noose. Let me see—this is the first week in July; the trial begins in October. Do you think I shall live until October, doctor?"

"Candidly, I do not," answered Dr. Carter.

A look of intense relief passed over the wan, white face of the accused man.

"Ah, that is indeed good news, doctor!" he exclaimed. "But I was sure that I would cheat the gallows."

"You seem to be quite convinced that you would be found guilty," remarked the doctor.

"Well, you know the circumstantial evidence against me is very strong, doctor."

"And yet, you never committed that murder," said Dr. Carter, quietly.

James Jones started and looked quickly into the doctor's face.

"How do you know that, doctor?" he cried.

"Simply from the fact that you were physically incapable of striking the blow that killed Spencer," he replied. "That blow could only have been delivered by a strong person—certainly not by a man in the last stages of consumption."

A short silence followed. James Jones was breathing quickly and the emaciated hand outside the coverlet trembled. It was the first time that Dr. Carter had seen him display any emotion.

"You are right, doctor," he said at length. "I did not murder Spencer."

"Tell me, Jones, why you never made any assertion to that effect before?" asked the doctor, somewhat curiously. "This is the first time that you have ever hinted that you were innocent."

"I have never asserted that I was innocent, doctor, because if I were not guilty actually, I was in intent," was the quiet reply. "Not that I intended murdering Spencer, but I did intend to rob him of that ten thousand dollars. I was prevented from making the attempt only by the man who both robbed and murdered him."

"What do you mean?" cried Dr. Carter, excitedly.

"Doctor, you have been very good to me," continued James Jones. "I would like to confide to you the strange circumstances of this matter. I think that you will believe me, sensational and improbable as they are. Draw your chair closer. In the first place, I wish to speak very briefly of myself. I am a gentleman by birth and education. Dissipation and bad habits not only wrecked me physically, but brought me down to the lowest depths of poverty and degradation.

"James Jones is not my real name; that I discarded long ago. I had manhood enough left not to drag my father's honored name in the mire. I was only a common tramp when I fell in with Spencer. As I watched him staggering down the street that night in the moonlight I suddenly thought how easy it would be to follow and rob him in his drunken condition. A few maddening thoughts of what that amount of money would mean to me whirled through my brain and then I started after that reeling form.

"The night was windy and part of the time the moon was obscured by moving clouds. I followed Spencer through town and out into the country before discovering, to my astonishment, that another man was also following him. There was a stealthiness in the former's movements which convinced me that his intentions were no better than my own. I could not get a very good look at him, for, when the moon came forth from the clouds, he slunk along in the shadows cast by the trees on either side of the road. He was gaining rapidly upon Spencer, and once I saw him stoop and pick up something from the ground. Of course I knew that my designs were frustrated, but still I followed, impelled by a desire to learn how matters would terminate. I also kept in the shadow of the trees, and had gotten quite near to the two when the moon was again obscured.

"It was dark for about three minutes, it seemed to me, and then the moon came from under the clouds and it was again light as day. I almost cried out at the sight its light revealed. Spencer was stretched at full length, face downward, upon the ground. The other man was kneeling beside him. I sprang behind a tree and watched breathlessly. In a moment or so the man arose. In his hand he held the package of banknotes which I saw Spencer display in the saloon. The murderer gave a quick, frightened look about him, and for the first time I saw his face, clearly, distinctly."

"You saw his face?" cried Dr. Carter, excitedly. "What was it like?"

James Jones shook his head with a faint smile.

"I could hardly describe it," he replied. "It was a white face, wild and scared. I would know it again if I were to see it. It was the unconquerable desire to find that face which brought me back. But I did not have time even to look about me. On the contrary, I found myself in the shoes of him for whom I was looking. Now, doctor, you know all. Do you believe me?"

"Why should I not believe you?" answered the doctor. "The world is full of the marvelous, and truth is often stranger than fiction. I do believe all that you have told me."

"Thank you, doctor," said James Jones. "You can understand, however, that such a story as I have told you would meet with but little credence had I sought to vindicate myself by relating it."

"I fear that you are right about that," admitted the doctor.

Dr. Carter left the infirmary puzzled, perplexed and wondering. Who was the murderer of Spencer? Had he made good his escape or was he still in Cambridge secure in the absence of suspicion against himself, with another under accusation for his crime?

CHAPTER VII.

The bride and groom returned after an absence of six weeks. The latter appeared fully restored to health. His face had lost its white, haggard look, his eyes their somberness.

The morning after her return the bride was in her pretty boudoir with her young sister-in-law, when a servant entered and informed her that Mrs. Spencer desired to see her."

"Mrs. Spencer?" repeated young Mrs. Orme, bewilderedly.

"Why, she must be the widow of that poor fellow who was murdered," said Charlotte. "What can she want with you, Louise?"

"I am sure I have not an idea," replied Louise. "You can show her in here, Albert," to the servant.

In a few moments a woman clad in deep mourning entered the room, holding a little child by the hand, a pretty, curly-haired little boy about three years of age.

"Take a seat, Mrs. Spencer," said Louise. The child immediately attracted her, and she added, "What a dear little boy! Won't you come and give me a kiss, dear, I am very fond of little boys."

The child left his mother's side and ran up to Louise, lifting his face to hers. She lifted him upon her lap, charmed with his beauty. He had large, soft, brown eyes, pink cheeks and golden-brown curls. His little frock and cap were black. He seemed very much pleased with Mrs. Orme. Perhaps he found her pretty face and bright, dainty dress a welcome contrast to his mother's somber garb and grave, unsmiling face.

Louise turned from the child to the mother.

"You desire to see me, Mrs. Spencer?" she said, gently.

"I have come to you, Mrs. Orme, to ask you to give me employment," replied the woman, speaking with something of an effort. "I am willing to do almost anything to support myself and my child. As you have doubtless heard, the money for which my poor husband was murdered represented all we had in the world. I am penniless and in a few days I shall be without a home. I have come to ask you to give me a position in your household, no matter how menial."

Louise felt rather perplexed. Mrs. Spencer did not look like a woman who was fitted to fill a menial position. She was tall, rather stately in carriage, with a dark, strong face, a firm mouth and penetrating dark eyes.

While Louise was hesitating, Charlotte Orme spoke.

"Louise, I know of something that would just suit Mrs. Spencer," she said. "The people at the lodge left a week ago and Walter has been looking for some one to replace them."

Mrs. Spencer looked eagerly at Louise.

"I shall speak to my husband about it this evening," said the latter. "I will let you know his decision in the matter tomorrow."

"Thank you very much," Mrs. Spencer said, as she arose. "I will bid you good-morning."

"Ain't her a pitty lady, mamma?" said the boy, looking up into his mother's face, as they moved along the hall toward the front door.

"Yes, dear," replied Mrs. Spencer, "and she has sympathy for the unfortunate, though she has never known sorrow and suffering herself. After all," she murmured, musingly, as she glanced about the handsome-appointed hall, "I would prefer not being in the house. There is something here that seems to oppress me. Perhaps it is because I am reminded that if Walter Orme had taken the money that night when my husband went to him I would not now be widowed and homeless."

She sighed bitterly, while the child by her side laughed as they passed out into the bright sunlight. Mrs. Spencer walked along with heavy, brooding eyes bent upon the ground. Sorrow did not have a softening effect upon a nature like hers; on the contrary, it hardened and embittered her. She had loved her husband very dearly. It was true that Spencer sometimes drank, but he had been a kind husband and father. It was bitterly hard to lose husband, home, everything, at one blow, and Mary Spencer did not bow her head meekly beneath such tribulation.

After dinner that evening Louise spoke to her husband about Mrs. Spencer.

"Walter, the wife of that poor fellow, Spencer, who was murdered, called upon me today." Walter Orme gave a quick start, looked a this wife, then bent his eyes upon the ground. "She told me that she and her child were left destitute and asked me to give her employment. I pity her so much, Walter, and I would like to help her. She has such a dear little boy."

"What would you like to do for her?" asked Walter. His voice had an odd sound and he did not lift his eeys.

"Could you not give her the lodge, Walter? I promised her I would speak to you about it. You have not found any one yet, have you?"

"No." He paused for a moment. "Do you wish this very much, Louise?" he added.

"Yes, Walter, very much indeed. I would like to help the poor woman. I have everything on earth to make me happy, and that poor woman is sorely bereft."

"Carry out your wish, then," he said. "Only make all the arrangements yourself and let me see as little of the woman as possible."

She glanced at him at first in surprise. Then for the first time it occurred to her that perhaps he blamed himself that he had not taken the money from Spencer that night.

"I understand, dear," she murmured tenderly, as she laid her fair head on his shoulder. "But you could not foresee what would occur. You must not worry about it."

He bent and kissed her, but he shuddered as he did so.

That same day, in the afternoon, as Dr. Carter was walking down Main street with an acquaintance, young Mrs. Orme and Charlotte passed them in a pretty dog-cart.

"Young Mrs. Orme is very pretty," remarked the doctor's companion. "Young Orme is a lucky fellow, rich, prosperous, with a charming wife. By the way, did you ever hear any rumor to the effect that Orme & Son were financially embarrassed?"

The doctor looked up in surprise.

"Never," he replied. "Why do you ask?"

"Why, shortly before Mr. Orme's death I heard something to the effect that he had been trying to raise a large sum of money and could not do so," was the reply. "I was a little alarmed at the time, as I deposit rather largely with them. Old Mr. Orme's sudden death occurred shortly afterward, and I knew if there was anything wrong the crash would come then. But it did not, so I suppose there was no truth in the rumor."

"None at all, I am convinced of that," said Dr. Carter. But even as he spoke the strange words uttered by old Mr. Orme just before he died flashed into his mind: "My poor children, forgive me that I leave you only ruin and dishonor."

CHAPTER VIII.

It was quite early upon the following morning when Dr. Carter started for the jail infirmary. Shortly before reaching his destination he overtook Walter Orme and Louise, who often went for a morning canter.

"Why, good-morning, doctor," cried Louise, turning toward him with a smile. She was looking very lovely, the pink in her cheeks deepened by the exercise and her eyes sparkling. "Where are you going in this direction?"

"I am on my way to the jail infirmary," he replied.

A slight shadow fell across her bright face.

"The murderer of Spencer—he is there, is he not?" she asked.

"The accused murderer of Spencer is there," the doctor gravely amended.

"Why, have you any doubt as to his guilt, doctor?" she cried.

"Louise, why enter into a discussion of so dismal a subject?" interposed Walter Orme, before the doctor had time to reply. "Come, let us have a gallop, here is a fine stretch of road."

He touched his horse with the whip, and Louise, with a smiling nod to Dr. Carter, followed.

The doctor found James Jones up, dressed and sitting by the window. It was one of his "good days." His face brightened at the sight of Dr. Carter.

"You are feeling better today?" said the latter.

"Yes," was the reply, "and tomorrow I may be very ill."

"Yes, that is one of the phases of your disease," said the doctor. "I only wish you were stronger, Jones; we might run down the murderer of Spencer. He may still be here in our midst and you say you would recognize his face if you saw it again."

"Yes, I would know him again," said Jones, with quiet conviction. "But," with a slight smile, "you forget, doctor, that it would not do me any good if I were to get stronger. It might mean the gallows for me. To tell you the truth doctor," with sudden earnestness, "I have no desire to bring that poor devil to justice. Perhaps it is a sort of fellow-feeling, for you know I was bent upon the same purpose. I know the force of the temptation."

"But you had no thought of committing murder," said the doctor.

"I do not believe that the poor devil did intend to kill Spencer—only to stun him and then rob him," said Jones.

"But there is another side to the question," said the doctor. "If the murderer were discovered your name would be cleared."

A faint smile touched Jones' wan lips.

"What difference does it make, doctor, if James Jones, lying buried in the pauper-burying-ground, is supposed to have committed murder?" he answered, quietly. "There will be no one put to shame by the stigma, as there will be no one to shed a tear that his worthless life is ended."

"Jones," said the doctor, earnestly, "will you not allow me to communicate with your friends? If not now, then after you are dead? Then you will not lie in Potter's field."

"No, doctor," replied Jones, with a firmness which Dr. Carter saw it was useless to contend against. "James Jones, tramp, drunkard, supposed thief and murderer, has no friends. He will die as he has lived for many years—an outcast from home and kindred. His will not be the first misspent life that has ended in a pauper's grave."

He turned his face toward the window, and his eyes grew a little wistful.

"The earth is so beautiful," he murmured. "Why is there so much sin, misery and degradation upon it?"

Then suddenly Dr. Carter saw a startling change come over his face, his lips whitened, his eyes dilated, the hand resting upon the window sill began to tremble. He arose to his feet with a sudden strength born of excitement. For the moment he stood erect.

"What on earth is the matter with you, Jones?" cried Dr. Carter.

Jones pointed down into the road almost directly beneath the window.

"Look!" he muttered hoarsely; "look!"

Dr. Carter obeyed, quite prepared for some extraordinary or awful sight. But there was nothing, only young Mr. and Mrs. Orme riding by on their way home. Louise's charming face was turned toward her husband and her light laughter came floating up to the two men at the window. Walter Orme's face, a smile upon the lips as he looked at his young wife, was turned toward the window.

"Well, Jones, I fail to see anything to account for such excitement on your part," said Dr. Carter, a little impatiently.

Jones sank back into his chair, panting and trembling, as the two riders passed out of sight.

"That face, doctor!" he muttered. "That man's face—it is the same I saw that night. That man—whoever he be—murdered Spencer!"

Dr. Carter regarded Jones for a moment or so reflectively.

"My poor fellow, you are dreaming or delirious," he said at length. "It is quite impossible for what you assert to be true. That young man is Walter Orme—one of the richest and most prominent citizens in this town. He could have no possible motive for robbing Spencer. Your assertion is simply preposterous."

Jones lifted his trembling hand and wiped his forehead upon which the sweat stood thickly.

"That all may be true, doctor," he replied. "But that man's face is the one I saw as the murderer of Spencer arose with the package of banknotes in his hand and looked, with wild, frightened eyes, about him. I told you I would know it again if I should see it, and I did the moment my eyes rested upon that man. That night it was a white, wild, scared face; just now it was happy and smiling, but I knew it just the same."

The man spoke with a quiet conviction which carried weight. Dr. Carter walked once or twice up and down the room. Then he paused beside Jones.

"Your imagination has led you astray, Jones," he said. "Why, on the very night that Spencer was murdered old Mr. Orme died and Walter Orme was with him. I saw him myself. You see it was quite impossible for Walter Orme to have been in two places at the same time."

"At about what time did old Mr. Orme die, doctor?" asked Jones.

"At a little after 11 o'clock," was the reply.

"And the murder was committed between eight and nine," added Jones.

"My God! man, do you intend to persist in this preposterous assertion?" cried Dr. Carter, his heart growing sick as he thought of Louise.

A smile, half bitter, half satiric, passed over Jones' lips.

"What would it avail me, doctor, if I did?" he replied. "I am perfectly convinced in my own mind that the man who rode by here a little while ago is the murderer of Spencer—but who would believe my assertion to that effect, and I have no proof to bring forward to sustain it? They would say—as you did, doctor—that I was dreaming, delirious, perhaps mad."

"I am beginning to believe that you believe what you assert to be true," said Dr. Carter. "But I do not credit for an instant that this thing is true. You are yourself deceived by a fancied resemblance."

"I know nothing of that young man save what you have told me, doctor," said Jones. "I have no idea what could have prompted him to such a crime, but that he committed it I have not a doubt."

Suddenly there flashed into Dr. Carter's mind the words spoken by old Mr. Orme just before he died; also that question put to him the day before as to whether he had ever heard a rumor that Orme & Son were financially embarrassed. He aroused himself with a shudder and thrust the thoughts aside.

A violent fit of coughing had seized Jones and in a moment the blood gushed from his mouth. Excitement had brought on a hemorrhage.

When a little later Dr. Carter was about to leave him, he murmured—he was too weak to speak above a whisper:

"I am done for this time, doctor. God bless you for all your kindness to a poor wretch like me."

"Oh, it is not so bad as that, I hope," replied the doctor. "I shall see you again this afternoon."

Jones smiled and shook his head. The doctor was giving some final instructions to the nurse when Jones was taken with another hemorrhage and in a few minutes he was dead.

Dr. Carter left the infirmary very much disturbed in mind. He had some patients to see at the other end of town and he put his horse to a brisk gallop in an effort to banish the thoughts which harassed and tortured him.

He went by Orme Hall on his return to town some hours later. A woman, clad in black, whom he recognized as Mrs. Spencer, was standing at the gates. Dr. Carter had heard that she had been given the position of lodge-keeper at Orme Hall. As she saw him approaching she opened the gates and advanced into the road. A brown-eyed, curly-haired boy was clinging to her skirts.

The doctor reined up his horse.

Mrs. Spencer came closer and looked up into his face. She was so pale that he thought at first she was ill and wished to consult him professionally, but as soon as she spoke he knew he was mistaken.

"Doctor, is it true that that wretch who murdered my husband is dead?" she asked, abruptly.

"The man accused of the murder of your husband is most certainly dead," replied Dr. Carter, gravely.

A look not pleasant to see gleamed in the woman's eyes.

"So he has escaped," she muttered. "And I—I would have given five years of my life had he lived to be hanged."

Dr. Carter looked down sternly upon Mrs. Spencer's distorted face, revolted at her vindictiveness.

"That man has not been proven guilty of your husband's death," he said. "And innocent or guilty, he has gone to be judged by a higher tribunal. Leave him to the God who said, 'Vengeance is Mine.'"

The woman's eyes fell, but her face did not soften; it was hard, sullen, vindictive. At that moment Walter Orme came galloping down the avenue. Mrs. Spencer stooped, lifted her child in her arms and went to open the gate. Dr. Carter, who was keenly observing Walter Orme, saw the fair, handsome face cloud slightly at the sight of the black-robed woman at the gates. Then he turned with a smile toward the doctor.

"Aren't you coming in, doctor?" he asked.

"No, thank you, I stopped to speak to Mrs. Spencer," replied the doctor.

"Ah!" There was something strained in his voice. "Is there anything wrong with her or her child?"

"No, she simply wished to inquire if it were true that James Jones, the accused murderer of her husband, were dead," replied the doctor, quietly, and his eyes lingered upon Walter Orme's face as he spoke.

A swift pallor swept that handsome face from chin to brow. Dr. Carter noted how his hand clenched upon his whip. Then he looked across at the doctor with a strange excitement in his eyes.

"And—and is he dead?" he asked.

"Yes, he died this morning." The doctor's steady pulses had quickened.

There was silence for a few moments, broken only by the singing of a bird in a tree near by. That sweet thrilling song was all discord in the ears of Dr. Carter. He was face to face with a possibility that turned him sick at heart.

"Well," said Walter Orme, at length, and his voice had a harsh, forced ring, "the fellow has made a fortunate escape. He would in all probability have been hanged."

"Then they would have hanged an innocent man," said Dr. Carter, curtly.

"What do you mean?" cried Walter Orme, sharply. "There seems to be no room to doubt that the man was guilty."

"There was never the slightest doubt in my mind as to his innocence," said Dr. Carter. "A man in his physical condition could not have struck the blow which killed Spencer."

Orme's horse suddenly began to rear and plunge. His master had almost unconsciously dug the spurs into his sides. While Walter Orme was [illegible] his horse the doctor murmured a brief good-evening and continued on his way.

"My God!" he murmured, with a shiver in the warm air, "is Louise the wife of a murderer?"

In next week's issue of the Ledger the reader will find the continuation of this intensely interesting story. To each subscriber we are still sending a camera or patterns free, as announced on pages thirteen and fifteen.

Fortune's Freelance.

(Continued from page seven.)

with these. I just wakened Barry and gave him a handout——"

"Wakened him?" echoed Wingate. "Why, he was on guard."

"And he was asleep, too. I'll go over and give Miss Grayson her share of the provender. After you're done eating, stand by for warm work! it's liable to come any minute."

"Tell Miss Grayson that she's to remain right where she is," Wingate called after Cameron.

"I understand," the sheriff answered.

Wingate finished his sandwiches and looked to his revolvers. Presently he heard some one scrambling over the rocks and stepped around the boulder to see who it was. It was the doctor, flushed and excited.

"The train's on the move!" exclaimed Barry. "I heard the bell."

"Sure you didn't dream it, Barry?"

"What do you mean?"

"Why, Cameron said you were asleep, and—"

The doctor spluttered wrathfully. Cameron came up just then and Barry told him of the movement going forward on the other side of the passage.

"Take to your fort, Doc," said the sheriff. "Don't forget that I'm to take care of the first man, Wingate takes the second and you take the third. I don't believe we'll have to do any shooting; just get the drop and that will be enough."

Barry scurried for his shelter, Wingate and Cameron simultaneously seeking their own places. Wingate looked up toward the spot he had selected for Monica.

He saw her leaning over a rock and looking down at him. He motioned her to drop out of sight, and she vanished with a smile and a wave of the hand.

Hardly was she hidden when three men emerged from the passage. Dellplaine's estimate of the rascals was entirely correct.

Wingate had encountered the riffraff of many countries, but had never looked upon faces so wholly evil as were these. They were big, swaggering rogues, all three of thm, and would as lief cut a throat as eat a meal.

They walked in single file and, apparently, were heading for the water-hole. Back of the last man came the bell-burro, its pack small but heavy and covered with canvas.

Five burros followed the leader and more were coming. The foremost of the villains—O'Donnell, probably—was abreast of Cameron.

The moment was ripe for action and the sheriff was not slow in taking the initiative. His head rose above his boulder. Tucking his rifle-butt into his shoulder, he looked at O'Donnell over the sights.

"O'Donnell!" he shouted.

The leader of the trio turned with a jump. No surprise was ever more complete. Momentary panic struck to the hearts of the three men. As O'Donnell got a grip on his faculties, both hands jumped for his hips.

"No, you don't!" roared Cameron. "Lift your hands! Lift 'em!"

"You, too!" called Wingate, holding a revolver on the second of the three.

"And you!" whooped Barry, his Winchester lined on the third.

There were curses, lurid and heartily given. Cameron, Wingate and Barry then stepped into full view and advanced upon the ruffians, who were straining themselves to hold their hands as high as possible.

"Line 'em up," said Cameron, and the trio stepped shoulder to shoulder, facing the burros, the passage and their captors.

That first outburst of profanity seemed to have drawn the temper out of the prisoners. As they peered into the weapons leveled at them thy becam almost placid.

Up toward the brow of the hill on the left, Wingate caught a glimpse of Monica. She seemed tremendously excited over something and was calling at the top of her voice and waving her hands.

"[illegible] your other gun, Wingate," said Cameron, "and draw a bead on this fellow. I'm going around behind 'em and snake out their hardware."

"Don't!" snarled a venomous voice from the rear. "Stand right whar ye be an' give us a chance ter snake out yours."

The doctor went right up into the air. A chill passed through Wingate and Cameron [illegible]

Dellplaine had said there were only three with that pack-train. How could he have made such a mistake in the count?

Wingate stole a side glance over his shoulder. Three more desperate men had followed the last pack burro through the passage.

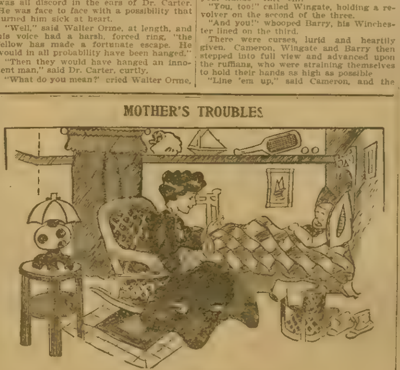
The entire force of nine was in close formation, in columns of threes. First came O'Donnell and his two, leering into the gun-muzzles of the second three; then the third group, with firearms leveled at the center file.

The trappers were trapped. Wingate understood, now, the cause of Miss Grayson's excitement.

His eyes flashed up the hill, and he was glad to observe that the girl was out of sight again.

Further chapters of this very tragic and adventurous story will be found in the Ledger issue of next week. Each person subscribing for the Ledger is requested to note that cameras and patterns are given free with each subscription, as announced on pages thirteen and fifteen.

MOTHER'S TROUBLES



Mother—Remember, Tommy, an angel is watching over you.
Tommy—Aw, ma! Don't be conceited!

NO DIFFERENCE

Old People Just as Happy as Young.

Age cannot wither nor custom stale the infinite variety of life.

When the right food makes one new each day there seems as much simple happiness when one is old as when young, but bounding health is the requisite and right food produces that.

A happy woman of 77 tells her experience.

"For three years," she says, "I was greatly troubled with a nervous affection of the stomach, which at last brought me to such a condition that I could neither eat nor sleep with any sort of comfort. I grew very despondent and felt that my hold on life was very uncertain. It was difficult for me to find food that I could digest. My doctor kept me on a diet of rice for a long time, but it did not seem to give me any strength.

"I am glad that at last I decided to try Grape-Nuts food, for it has done a wonderful work for me. Before I had used up the first package I began to take a new interest in life, and I rapidly increased in health and strength. My stomach has regained its normal tone and in the two years that Grape-Nuts has been my only food, I have not had a sick day. I am 77 years old and Grape-Nuts has restored to me the pleasure of living. I am sorry I did not begin sooner to use it. I cannot praise it too highly." Name given by Postum Co., Battle Creek, Mich.

There's a reason.

A 10 days' trial is sufficient.

A Kansan Surprised.

A resident of Kansas was crossing the Atlantic in rough weather. One morning he went out on deck when a big gale was blowing. Nobody was in sight except the captain.

"Go below there!" the captain shouted.

The passenger looked around to see whom he was talking to.

"You mean me?" he yelled back when he saw there was no one else in sight."

"Of course I do; go below," and the captain came alongside.

"Well, guess not," protested the Kansan. "I'm up here to see how one of your mountain-high waves and terrific gales compare with what we have in Kansas in the way of cyclones. This ain't a patch to what I've seen out our way."

A big wave broke over the deck, sweeping the Kansan aft. They picked him up with a broken leg, a twisted shoulder, a sprained wrist, and his face looking as if it had been dragged backward through a briar patch. When he came to, he saw the captain.

"By gravy, Cap," he said, feebly, "that reminded me of home, only it was a dern sight wetter."

A Tough Rabbit.

An angry woman walked into grocery in Columbus, Ohio, and banged a piece of yellow substance on the counter.

"This," she said, "is the soap that does the washing itself; the soap that makes every washing day a kind of glorified feast; the soap that gets all the linen white as snow and as sweet as a hazelnut and let's the delighted housewife play with the children—and here I've been scrubbing three mortal hours with that lump and got no more lather out of it than I could get out of a brick."

"I beg your pardon," said the grocer, calmly, "but that isn't soap. Your little boy was here yesterday for half a pound of cheese and half a pound of soap. That's the cheese."

"The cheese!" exclaimed the woman. "Then that accounts for the other thing."

"What other thing?"

"I lay awake the whole night wondering what made the Welsh rabbit we had for supper taste so queer and tough."

BOY'S AND GIRL'S CORNER

TWO YOUNG INVENTORS;

or, The Story of a Flying Boat; by Alvah Milton Kerr.

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Begun in No. 30, July 29. Subscriptions can begin with that issue, or back copies can be obtained from news stands, or our agents, or by mail from office of publication.

CHAPTER VIII.

MR. PINKSON'S EXPLOIT.

Nathan Harp did not return home from Sidwell until 11 o'clock that night. The following morning when the family and hired people were gathered about the long table in the wagon shed, he offered them information regarding his trip. All, and especially Dannie, were anxious for news. As the big serving dish of eggs and bacon went round, to be followed by heaping plates of hot griddle-cakes with coffee, Dannie raised his voice.

"Uncle, did you see anything of Mr. Blue-tooth over at Sidwell?" he asked.

"Mr. Blue-tooth? Who in the world do you mean?" Uncle Nathan asked, pausing with a bite half way to his lips.

"The man who wanted to take Mute away. Didn't you notice that he had a long blue eye-tooth?"

Uncle Nathan laughed. "No, I didn't. Well, I heard that he had been seen in Sidwell, but he wasn't around anywhere last night that I could find. I guess he took himself off in some other direction. But I heard from the big fish, Dannie. The muskallonge bids fair to make you and your chum famous. I received a letter. I'll read it to you." Uncle Nathan took a letter from his pocket, and adjusting his glasses on his nose, pulled a typewritten sheet from the envelope. He read as follows:

"Advertising Department, Northern Central R. R., St. Paul, Minn., Aug. 27:

"Nathan Harp, Esq., Sidwell, Minn.—Dear Sir: We beg to advise you that a taxidermist of this city has called our attention to an exceedingly large muskallonge caught from a lake on your farm, contiguous to our railroad line.

"From the best data we have been able to obtain, it appears that this is the largest fish ever taken from the interior lakes of this State. We are anxious, therefore, to obtain either temporary or permanent possession of the mounted specimen for exhibition purposes, since the magnificent fish was caught in the region traversed by our railroad. You can readily perceive that the specimen might be of much value to us when the tourist and fishermen passenger traffic is considered. The fish has been treated and mounted successfully, and if we may purchase it, it is my desire, as manager of the company's advertising department, to exhibit it to the public in our dining-car service for several weeks, then to make it the chief decoration of one of the walls of the General Passenger Agent's office, or, possibly, the office of the President of the road.

"The taxidermist informs me that this 'shark of the unsalted seas' was taken from the water by a nephew of yours and a young companion of his, both mere lads. The taxidermist has also placed in my hands two printed accounts of this great example of the angler's art, one clipped from a Sidwell paper and the other from the columns of a St. Paul paper. I have the name of your nephew but not of his comrade. I would be very glad if you would send me photographs of the two lucky lads, together with the name of the intrepid young fellow who assisted your nephew in the great capture, since, whether you conclude to sell us the specimen or not, we desire to print a picture of the great muskallonge and his captors in some advertising matter which we have in preparation.

"However, the chief of the passenger department agrees with me that we ought, if possible, to induce you to sell us the mounted fish in order that we may use it as a permanent specimen of the sort that may be had in the waters reached by our line. I therefore am authorized to offer you, or your nephew and his comrade, as the case may be, two hundred dollars for the mounted muskallonge. If the amount does not seem sufficient kindly advise us as to what sum may be satisfactory.

"Further. I have taken the liberty to inclose herewith two passes from Sidwell to St. Paul and return, made out to Dannie Dool and one other. Perhaps the two young fellows would like to take a trip to the capital. In that event we should be pleased to have them call at the general offices of the road, since, if they have no available photographs of themselves, we may have pictures of them taken by our staff photographer.

"In any case, we should be very glad to meet them and have their account of the capture of this king of the muskallonge tribe. Should our offer of two hundred dollars meet with your approval, please so inform us and a check for the amount will be at once mailed you.

"Trusting that we may hear from you at an early date, or, at least, that we may have the pleasure of meeting your nephew and his mate here at headquarters soon, I am, very respectfully yours,

"TORRENCE YOUNG,
"G. A. A. of N. C. R. R.

"P. S. It has occurred to me that the lake from which the big fish was taken might, if at present it bears no name, be called Lake Dannie Dool, or some title that would embrace the names of the two already famous young fishermen. I shall be glad to receive any suggestion on this head which you may care to make. It will be necessary, of course, to call the lake by some name in our printed matter. The more euphonious the title the better."

"Well," said Uncle Nathan, laying down the letter, "what do you think of that?" He looked over his glasses smilingly at those about the table.

From all parts of the long table came exclamations. "Well, I swan!" "Don't it beat the band!" "Hurrah for the kids!" "Who in the world would have thought it!" being some of the ejaculations.

"Let's see the passes!" cried Dannie, jumping up and running around to his uncle's side. The boy's face and eyes were glowing. He ran with the two important pieces of pasteboard and put them down before Mute and threw his arm across his comrade's shoulders. "We're going down to St. Paul! We will see the Capitol building and the Mississippi River and a whole lot of things!" he panted. "We are to have two hundred dollars—a hundred each, to spend! Think of it! Whew!"

"Perform a clog! Perform a clog! It's the right place to dance!" said Luke.

Mute looked at the yellow bits of pasteboard. "Oh, passes! passes! I know," he said, smiling.

"Do you want to go?" Dannie asked.

The youth nodded his head. "Yes, anywhere that you go," he replied.

"Can we go, Uncle Nathan?" Dannie cried.

"Well, I expect so. I reckon it's the best thing to do. I telegraphed to Colonel Nelson James but didn't get any reply. If he don't answer, you boys could go around to the address and see if there is such a person, and if we do hear from him tomorrow or next day you can take your young friend home anyhow. It might be to your advantage in some way, you know."

Dannie performed the clog with enthusiasm.

Four days afterward, no word having been received from Colonel James, Dannie and Mute boarded the early morning train bound for the capital. The day before they had been down to the wreck of the flying boat and had given it a half hour or so of consideration. Mute had lingered over it lovingly, though he was still unable to explain its mechanism clearly.

"Well, maybe some day we will understand it every way, then I expect we will want to rebuild it or make a new one," Dannie had said.

"Yes," Mute assented.

After that they had hauled the sailing-wagon to the house and into the barnyard and left it, agreeing that upon their return they would equip it for further adventures; they had gone around to the spot where the squawking scarecrow man was standing sentry, and had thrown the wind wheel out of gear, that the "man" might not wear himself out unnecessarily. Then, when the soft summer night had fallen and they had gone to bed in the granary building, they talked for a long time about inventions and the coming journey. Dannie, at least, had slept but little, and such slumber as came to him had been beset with dreams of flying machines, locomotives with enormous wings, a muskallonge with so large a mouth that he had walked into it as into a cavern, and an iron man that was fully fifty feet tall, and who, with a prodigious flail beat the grain out of a whole wheat-rick in less than five minutes, then blew the chaff and straw away with his breath, leaving the grain in a clean pile upon the ground. In the midst of this astonishing performance he had been awakened by Luke, who was beating on the floor with one of his own big "hired man's" boots, and calling to Dannie to get up. He had found that it was 3 o'clock in the morning, and after that Uncle Nathan had driven them in the spring wagon to Sidwell through a silent dark-gray world roofed with a low, violet sky in which throbbed many stars. At 5 o'clock they had climbed aboard the train and were off to new scenes and fresh experiences.

The train was from the far Pacific. It had crossed the Cascade Range, the blue Columbia, the Rocky Mountains, the vast range lands of eastern Montana, the vaster wheat lands of the Dakotas, and was making for Chicago connections at St. Paul. The long string of coaches were gray with dust, most of the passengers were asleep. Dannie and his comrade found a seat in the day-coach. Dannie was clad in his best Sunday suit, with new shoes and a new sailor straw hat, Mute was garbed in the navy-blue trousers and white sweater worn by him when found in the Marvel, though he had added to his apparel a light coat and cap which Uncle Nathan had purchased for him. Altogether the two lads looked very respectable.

Uncle Nathan, in reply to the letter received from the General Advertising Agent of the road, had dispatched a letter to the official the following morning stating that the captors of the muskallonge would, within a few days, profit by his kindness and visit St. Paul. They would call upon the official, bearing a note of introduction. Then, together they could pick out some appropriate name for the lake, if they liked; he, himself, was not particular.

As for selling the muskallonge, he had talked the matter over with his wife and the boys, and had concluded to pay the boys the same amount that the company had offered and keep the fish himself.

He was erecting a new dwelling, he said, and felt that he would like to have the mounted specimen on the wall of his dining room, a sort of souvenir of his nephew and the strange visit of his young friend, for, no doubt, in time they would cease to live under his roof.

However, he would freely consent to the railroad company's taking charge of the mounted muskallonge for a period of three months, during which time they might exhibit it as they saw fit, returning it to him when the stated period had elapsed. He regretted that he had at present no picture of his nephew or the young man who had aided in catching the fish. The official could have photographs of them made, if he cared to, after their arrival in the city.

This letter, no doubt, was quite satisfactory to the railroad official. At least, as will appear, he very promptly took advantage of Uncle Nathan's permission to exhibit the great muskallonge.

Indeed, arguing from developments, it seems probable, being an energetic advertising agent, that he had already put the beautiful fish on public view, believing, doubtless, that his offer made to Uncle Nathan would be accepted.

Mute and Dannie having seated themselves, the conductor soon came by and punched the pass which Dannie handed him. He looked curiously at the boys, then smiled. "Are you the two young fellows who caught the big fish in the lake near here?" he inquired.

Dannie was surprised. "Yes, sir, we caught him," he said, and flushed as he looked at the blue-clad, gilt-laced man.

"I thought perhaps you were the boys," the conductor said in a kindly way. "Our Mr. Young told me down at headquarters about it the other day, and said you would get on at Sidwell. He said if he could get permission he was going to put the fish on view in one of the dining cars. We take on a diner at Porter, in about half an hour from now. Well, I hope you'll have a pleasant trip," and he went onward about his duties.

The boys were pleased. Was it possible that they were actually growing famous through having caught simply a fish? It seemed probable, seeing that an astute and enterprising American advertising man had set about making capital out of their exploit. Almost any sort of unlooked-for thing might come about in such a case.

Presently as they sat looking out upon the rearward streaming fields, into which the early morning had spilled a wide sea of glory, Dannie spoke.

"I've been thinking what we will tell them to name our lake," he said. "Seems to me it would be nice to call it Lake Marvel. You see your boat Marvel brought you there, which is the strangest thing of all, and if you had not come I would probably never have gone fishing for the musky, and if it had not been for you we never could have got the fish out of the water, anyhow. Beside, Uncle Nathan says that Doctor Hammond said the fish was a marvel, so it seems like Lake Marvel would be a good name. What do you think?"

Mute looked at his young companion trustingly. "What you think is right seems right to me," he said. "The name sounds nice, anyway."

He still regarded Dannie with a kind of reverence, much as a child might look up to a trusted superior. To his mind, out of which much that was capable had been stricken, Dannie's seemingly clear knowledge and mastery of things looked wonderful. Besides Dannie was always kind to him, teaching him with patience and enthusiasm many things. Without being clearly conscious of the strength of the feeling, he had grown to love the country boy deeply. As for Dannie, this handsome young comrade of his, trusting, and in way, half helpless, set all the best elements of his nature working. He would eagerly have sacrificed himself in almost any fashion in order to aid and serve him.

"All right," he said, after a moment's silence, "then we will tell 'em to call it Lake Marvel."

He sat looking about him for a time. In the long coach, for the most part, the passengers were dozing or fast asleep, sodden and weary from hours, and in many cases two or three days of continuous travel. The coming of dawn had awakened some, but all about in the seats worn and dusty people still snored and nodded in attitudes that were anything but lovely. As Dannie looked around, vaguely wondering from from what point each one had come and whence they were going, the back of a man's head down near the forward end of the coach caught his attention. Somehow it looked familiar. Suddenly he started. "Why," he whispered to Mute, "if there isn't our Mr. Long-neck, the man with the blue tooth! See, in the third seat from the door!"

Mute craned his neck and looked. "Yes,"

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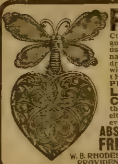

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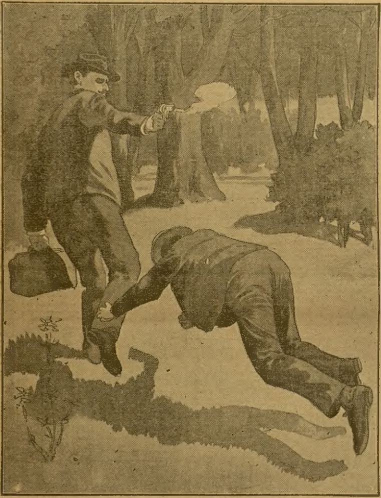
he assented, then apparently feeling no farther concern, turned and gazed out the open window, mistily watching the trees and fences and telegraph poles leaping toward the town they had left behind. Dannie got up and went forward to the front door of the car. As he passed the man he turned his sharp young eyes upon him scrutinizingly. The man now wore a soft hat and a mustache, but Dannie noted the scar under his ear and felt sure it was Mr. Joseph Pinkson. As Dannie passed, the man glanced up and slightly started, and as the boy returned toward his seat he saw that Mr. Pinkson had drawn his hat down upon his nose and seemed fast asleep. When Dannie had returned to his seat beside Mute he whispered:

"Yes, that's the chap who came out to the house and pretended to know all about you. He's got on a different hat and a false mustache; he's some kind of a rascal."

Mute looked puzzled. "Seems funny, don't it? I wonder what he's up to? Well, I never saw him before," and again the boy settled down to watching the landscape wheeling back toward Sidwell.

Dannie sat quiet after that watching the back of Pinkson's head and thinking of many things. The wheels under the train rumbled hoarsely, hiting the rail-joints in a succession of swift blows that seemed to call out continually "Click-clack, click-clack, click-clack." Under all the noise there was a sort of purring hum, the steady jarring of every fiber of the train. They seemed going very fast. Dannie heard a passenger remark sleepily to another that he "reckoned they were making up lost time." The boy was wondering what fashion of a man Pinkson could be—if he were a detective or thief or just a plain swindler of some sort. It all seemed very odd. Doubtless the fact that Dannie's mind was centered upon the man suspiciously prompted his swift action in the event that presently fell.



He had leaped headlong at the man's heels.

Ten or fifteen minutes after Dannie had walked down to the front of the car and looked at the interesting person sitting there, the train slackened its speed and stopped. They had arrived at a little river on the east bank of which stood a water tank. The train was stopped that the engine might be supplied with water. South of the track was a wood, broadening out around a lake that stretched two or three miles southward. Fringed with willows the little river entered the wood some three or four hundred feet distant from the track, and, a half mile further onward, flowed into the lake.

As the train was coming to a standstill Dannie noticed the man Pinkson arise and carelessly reach over to the seat next behind him and pick up a very neat valise, or, to more correctly describe it, a traveling salesman's sample case. In the seat from which Pinkson lifted the case sat a portly, well-dressed man. He had drawn the window-shade down and was leaning partly against it and was fast asleep.

Feeling the train coming to a stop, and obviously thinking they were entering Porter, a number of the passengers began to yawn and stir. Several, in an indifferent way, observed Pinkson take the case, but evidently thinking, if they considered the matter at all, that Pinkson had probably left his property in the seat where the portly gentleman had fallen asleep, they offered no protest.

But in Dannie's head matters were of a distinctly different cast. Something in his brain shouted most shrilly, "He's stealing it! He's robbing the man!" Instantly he jumped up and started swiftly forward, calling back to Mute, "Come on! come on!" As he passed the sleeping salesman he shouted, "You are being robbed! A man has taken your valise!" The man awoke with a cry and beat about him with his hands in a confused way, then leaped up. Dannie had gone out of the door like a shot. Just what he proposed doing was intensely clear to him—he was going to stop the thief. He had a natural horror of theft and dishonesty, and here was a man he disliked robbing another! How he was going to accomplish this capture was not at all plain to him; he simply lunged at the problem headlong.

The man with the case went down the steps on the north side of the train, ran back along the coach some fifteen feet and plunged under it. The car had just reached a full stop; the next instant the man came out from under the car upon its south side. Dannie had jumped to the ground on the north side, but, seeing the man disappear beneath the coach, he leaped up the steps and across the platform and to the earth on the south side. As he went down the steps Mute came after him and behind Mute the portly gentleman. Dannie heard a rising babble of cries within the car and the big salesman shouted:

"Some one's stolen my sample case! There's thousands of dollars' worth of diamonds in it!"

The words thrilled Dannie from crown to toe. After that he heard and saw literally nothing but the human creature he was bent on taking. The man was going down the railroad embankment in long leaps when Dannie jumped to the ground from the steps of the coach. Instantly he flew after the robber. Making for the woods, the man went over the fence that bordered the right-of-way like a deer. He ran swiftly and with a fierce effort to escape—in his hands wealth, before him liberty, behind him prison doors. But the grown man who distances a youth who is in his seventeenth year, who, light of foot and supple of limb, is on fire with a purpose that approaches madness, must be very fleet indeed.

Dannie simply touched the fence with one hand as he went over it. In four seconds he was one-third way across the open ground and the robber was not more than ten feet in front of him. Then they raced. When they were not more than twenty feet distant from the wood Dannie was almost at the man's heels. Then the man caught a pistol from his pocket as he ran, and swinging half way around, fired. Dannie fell.

But, though Dannie had gone down it was something more than a fall. He had leaped headlong at the man's flying heels. In the mad rush of the moment he could conceive of no other way of stopping the robber. As he struck the ground his arms for an instant clutched around the man's ankles. The robber sprawled ten feet away, the pistol flew almost into the wood. Before the man could fully recover himself the nimble Dannie was upon him. The boy pinioned him around the waist and they went to the ground sideways with Dannie uderneath. The next moment Dannie caught a glimpse of Mute's white face, and the next the robber was beside him on the grass and the three were clutched together and fighting as for life. Dannie felt blows that seemed to turn the whole world red, then he dimly saw the man above him, then he saw Mute flung off and down, and the man sprang into the wood and disappeared.

Dannie lay still a few moments, stunned, gasping, then he sat up. Eight or ten men were standing about him. He felt dizzy and gazed at them curiously, then he looked down; a false mustache lay on the grass beside him, the jewelry case was clutched between his knees!

The portly gentleman, red and blowing like a porpoise, snatched up the sample case and fairly hugged it. "My!" he gasped, "if he had got away with that I'd have been ruined! Think of me going to sleep with this kind of a thing in my charge!"

Dannie got to his feet. Mute was standing by calmly brushing his clothes. Dannie looked at him.

"Are you hurt?" he asked.

"Not a bit."

The conductor and the salesman each laid a hand on Dannie's shoulders. The boy was brushing his hair back from his eyes and some blood from his face. "Say, but you have the pluck all right," said the conductor, patting Dannie admiringly, "you are a regular young tiger! No wonder you landed the big fish! Are you hurt much?"

"No, I guess not. I feel pretty hot and mussed up, that's all." He glanced toward the train; nearly a hundred people, standing on the embankment, perched on the fence, or craning their necks from the car widows, were looking toward him. Dannie was suddenly ashamed. He wished he didn't have to go back to all those people; it was embarrassing.

Some of the men had gone a short way into the wood, but they came back. Mr. Joseph Pinkson had picked up the revolver as he passed under the trees and no man in the crowd possessed a firearm of any sort. Pursuit was hardly a safe procedure.

"We will send the sheriff and some deputies out from Porter," said the conductor, "if possible, that rascal must be caught."

"Yes, I'll personally give a reward," said the salesman.

"I presume the company will, too," said the conductor; "we don't relish carrying such passengers."

The big traveling man took a key from his wallet and unlocked the sample case. He took out two gold scarf pins, each set with a small diamond. "Here," he said, "I want to decorate you two boys. You can consider yourselves as belonging to the Legion of Honor or Knights of the Garter, or whatever you like. Anyway, you are the stuff out of which those orders are made, and I want you to understand that I appreciate what you have done."

Both Dannie and Mute demurred. "But, we don't want anything," said Dannie; "it was a lot of fun, just a lot of fun; don't mind it."

However, the men gathered about them and insisted, and the traveling man succeeded in pinning a jewel on each of the boys and they all went back to the train.

Quite naturally Dannie and Mute were looked upon as heroes. So much attention was paid to them that Dannie, at least, almost wished that he had not followed the robber.

When the train arrived at Porter, from which point a division of the road ran northeast to Duluth, the train was held a little time while the conductor and Mr. Howland, the salesman, arranged with the authorities to make an effort to apprehend the robber. Then, a dining car having been added to the train, they rolled onward. Mr. Howland insisted that the boys should go into the diner with him as his guests.

Dannie thanked him. "We've got some lunch with us," he said, "my aunt put up for us."

"Go into the emigrant car ahead and give it to the poor children. There are a lot of them in there. You and your chum are going to eat at my expense from here to St. Paul; the best that the dining car service can produce isn't good enough for you," said the salesman.

Dannie hesitated. "I'd like for them to have the food," he finally said, "if some one would give it to them. The folks look at us so much I'd rather hide than do anything else."

The big man laughed until he shook. "You'd hardly make a good drummer," he said. "Give me your basket; I'll do the peddling."

He placed his sample case between the two boys and took the basket of baked chicken, pie, jelly, and cake, and went into the car ahead. Presently he returned with

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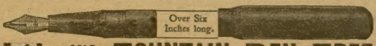

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the empty basket. "All right," he said, "now we'll go to breakfast."

They passed back to the dining car and seated themselves at a snowy table. There was a vase of fresh roses on the board, and to Dannie things looked very fine. As he glanced around the car he started and rose up with an exclamation of surprise. Near the center of the car upon one of the walls was a long, shallow, glass-covered case, and in the case the great muskallonge!

At that moment two or three gentlemen, together with the conductor, came into the diner from the Pullman.

"Well, Young, where did you drop from?" the conductor was asking.

"I came down from Duluth on Number Two," the man addressed replied. "I'm hungry as a bear."

He was a tall, clean, energetic-looking man, some forty years of age.

"Well," continued the conductor, "I see you've had them put up the fish. It certainly is a daisy. Say, I've got the boys that caught the fish; they're on the train. Well, by whacky, here they are! Come over to this table, Young. Say, they caught a robber, too, back at Sweet River tank. The wretch was running off with this gentleman's sample case. These young fellows are certainly hummers from Hummersville!"

The conductor introduced the boys and Mr. Howland to the General Advertising Agent and the other men. Mr. Young beamed and was very pleased to see them. He took a seat beside Dannie.

"I'll eat here with you, if you'll permit me," he said. "You gentlemen sit at the table here across the aisle, then we can talk, or rather, listen, for no doubt our young friends here will tell us about catching the big muskallonge, and Mr. Howland can tell about the robbery."

Dannie looked embarrassed, and Mute, too, though pleased, looked slightly ill at ease. However, the men were all pleasant and kind, and Mr. Howland, who sat by Mute at the table with Mr. Young and Dannie, talked of the attempted robbery and other things very entertainingly. Being urged, Dannie after a time told in a simple, modest way how he and Mute caught the muskallonge. Then, breakfast being presently finished, Mr. Young led the party back into the buffet car, where the men lit cigars, and where, during the run of nearly a hundred miles to St. Paul, Dannie and Mute heard told two or three stories that they will never forget.

This remarkable story will be continued in next week's Ledger. Any one desiring this great serial in book form can procure it, beautifully bound and illustrated, by addressing Lee & Shepard, 202 Devonshire street, Boston, Mass. Price $1.25.

FINANCE AND FIANCEE.

BY GEORGE HOLMES.

"That is final," asked Adriance.

"Absolutely," she confirmed quietly.

"If you would let me explain, only a word——"

"I wish," she interrupted, "that you would pay the waiter and let me leave."

"Just a moment," he pleaded. "I can explain everything."

"Call the waiter, please."

Jessie's voice was compelling, and slowly he slipped his hand into his pocket. He withdrew it and patted his breast pocket. Jessie watched him idly.

"If you are trying to pretend that you cannot find your money," she suggested, "I beg to assure you that I shall not listen to a word you say."

"It's not a pretense," he gasped, as he withdrew his hands from his trousers pockets. "I haven't a cent with me. When I changed this morning——"

"Very well," she said decidedly, "I shall pay the bill myself."

"Don't, please," he urged. "Some one I know will be along presently." He glanced eagerly about the big room. Jessie reached for her handbag.

"I insist upon paying," she said with fine scorn, "since you seem disposed to have recourse to this subterfuge to prolong the conversation which has grown so very distasteful to me."

"I give you my word," he declared with a shamed look, "that I have not a penny with me."

"You paid the cabman," she declared. "You must have seen that you had no money then."

"The cab is waiting outside the door now," he groaned.

Jessie pressed the spring of the bag and fished in its interior for her purse. Presently she shook upon the table a quarter, two pennies and a five-cent piece.

"I had some bills in here," she cried. "I remember putting them in this morning."

"Sure?" he asked. "I thought I had my money with me, but I haven't."

"I remember now," she mused. "I knew I was going to have lunch with you and would need no money, and I put it back in the desk. Cannot you send word to your apartment?"

"My man's off for the afternoon. Funeral, I think."

"Surely the head waiter knows you."

"No. The man who used to be here left last week. This is a new man."

"The proprietor?"

"Never gets down until six."

"Then we shall have to wait," she conceded. "I suppose some one will come in time."

Adriance turned to the waiter who had just come up. "Bring another pot of coffee and fresh cups," he ordered.

"I'd rather have an ice," she objected.

"You may have that, too," he agreed. "You can waste a lot of time over an ice."

"We shall have to pretend to talk," she suggested. "The waiter will know that we are not lingering just to have another ice."

"With all my heart," he cried. "I suppose you know that Jack Humphries is back in town."

"I'd rather talk about something more interesting," she complained.

"This is interesting," he contended. "You see, he brought his sister with him. The one who has been abroad for so long."

"She was at school in France, wasn't she?" asked Jesise.

"Near Paris. She is the girl you saw me with yesterday."

"How did you know that was what—what the trouble was about?" she demanded, curiously.

"You did not have to tell me in so many words that you were jealous," he laughed. "And little Lilla Humphries was the only possible cause for your jealousy I could think of."

"I was a little jealous," she conceded.

"A little?" There was amazement in his voice.

"Well," she corrected, "I was very jealous."

"And so you grew angry right in the middle of the lunch?" he questioned. "Why didn't you have it out with me coming down in the cab?"

"I was hoping you would tell me of your own accord," she admitted.

"And I never thought anything about it until just now when you gave me back the ring. It came like a flash."

"There's Jack Humphries now," she cried delightedly, "with his sister."

"Saved!" he cried in mock tragic tones. "I am not only absolved of the charge of loving another, but I can pay for this lunch."

It took but a moment to get some money from Humphries, and ten minutes later Jessie and Adriance were bowling down the street.

"Arthur," she whispered, as her hand clasped his beneath the apron of the hansom, "I'm awfully glad we both forgot our money."

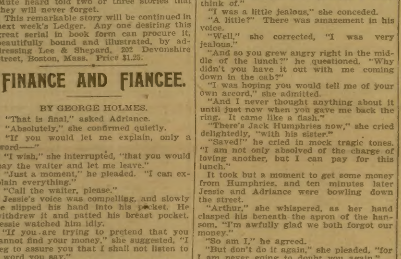
"So am I," he agreed.

"But don't do it again," she pleaded, "for I am never going to doubt you again."

A Cheerful Face.

Next to the sunlight of heaven is the cheerful face. There is no mistaking it. The bright eye, the unclouded brow, the sunny smile, all tell of that which dwells within. Who has not felt its electrifying influence? One glance at this face lifts us into the beautiful realms of hope. One cheerful face in the household will keep everything warm and light within. It may be a very plain face, but there is something in it we feel, but cannot express, and its cheery smile sends the blood dancing through the veins for very joy. There is a world of blessed magic in the plain, cheerful face, and we would not exchange it for all the soulless beauty that ever graced the fairest form on earth.

ESCAPED.



Johnny—Were you in the ark, grandpa?
Grandpa—No, indeed!
Johnny—Then how is it you weren't drowned?

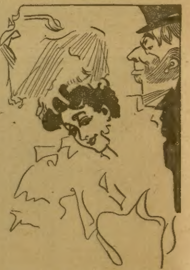
Observing Kaiser.

One incident illustrates Emperor William's interest in his American friend, Dr. Sylvester. The Kaiser's favorite drive is in the Thiergarten, the imperial deer park created years ago and now in the very heart of the modern city.

As his carriage rolled out through the Brandenburg gate he always looked for the American flag which hung over the American's house, and never failed to salute it. One day, when flags could be legally flown, the Kaiser looked for the star spangled banner and found it not.

Fifteen minutes later an aid-de-camp appeared at the door of Dr. Sylvester's house and presented the Emperor's inquiries as to why the American flag was not in evidence. He was informed that one of the doctor's new servants had forgotten to raise the flag. The omission was corrected at once.

Settled.



Oldbeau—Ya-as, it was last leap yeah that Miss Grabber pwoposed to me and it just knocked me silly!

Miss Sweetsteen—Really? I've often wondered what did it.

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TIMMINS, THE HANDY MAN

"Look here, my dear," said Mr. Timmins, tossing over the laces and ribbons in his wife's bureau, "what's become of the can opener? I don't see it anywhere."

"What do you want it for?" asked Mrs. Timmins, fluttering up to protect her trinkets, and trying to gain a little time.

"I want to open some sardines with it," retorted Mr. Timmins, abandoning the drawer and hunting through the work-basket. "D'yer think I want to comb my hair or write a letter with it? Well, I don't. I want some sardines. What have you done with it?"

"You might take your big knife," recommended Mrs. Timmins. "The large blade is just the thing for that."

Mr. Timmins seized the knife and bored away at one corner of the box, while his wife looked on with considerable distress.

"Hadn't you better put a paper under the box? You'll get oil all over the tablecloth," suggested Mrs. Timmins.

"No, I won't, either," said Mr. Timmins, as the knife plunged through and the oil spattered. "Serve you right if it did," he continued, plowing away at the tin, while the oil flew in all directions. "It would teach you to put the can opener where you find it. What kind of housekeeping do you call this, anyhow?" he yelled, as the blade slipped out and closed upon his fingers.

"Did you hurt yourself, dear?" asked Mrs. Timmins, anxiously.

"No, I didn't hurt myself," shrieked Mr. Timmins. "The knife only struck the bone. Give me some ether!" he howled. "Fetch me some chloroform! Do you s'pose I'm going to saw at this box any more without an anaesthetic? Have you an idea I'm going to chip off a couple of dozen fingers without something to deaden the pain? Where's the laughing gas? Give me some laughing gas while I extract these fish."

And Mr. Timmins pranced round the room and then jabbed the knife into the box again, and ripped away as though he was run by steam.

"No use to hide away from me!" he yelled, hacking at the box with all his might. "I know you're in there, and no sardine that ever was built can get away from me. Come out, I tell ye!" And he seized a fish by the tail and slung him across the room. "You're transacting business with Timmins now!" And he clawed out a handful of mashed sardines and slapped them down on a plate.

"Won't you spoil them, dear?" asked Mrs. Timmins, dodging the flying heads and tails. "They won't be very good if you open them that way."

"Oh, won't they?" howled Mr. Timmins. "P'raps you've got an idea I ought to climb under them and lift 'em out. Maybe you want me to get into that box with a boat and take 'em out with a casting net. Well, I won't. Give me the sugar tongs, I want that fish at the bottom. Where's the tongs? Gone to get married to the can opener, haven't they?"—and Mr. Timmins grabbed another fish and flung him into the grate.

"Be patient, my dear," said Mr. Timmins, soothingly; "make the opening a little wider, and they'll come out."

"Patient!" shouted Mr. Timmins. "Perhaps you want me to sing Dr. Watts' hymns to 'em. Come out of that!"—and with a wrench Mr. Timmins hauled off the top and disclosed the mangled remains of his enemies. "Now give me a lemon; quick, now."

"Upon my word, dear, I don't believe there's a lemon in the house," stammered Mrs. Timmins. "I had one——"

"Oh, you had one!" exclaimed Mr. Timmins, "only you're just out. You only need an awning and a family on the top floor to be a grocery store! D'ye suppose I'm going to eat these sardines raw? Think I'm going to swallow these fish alive? Gimme something to put with 'em, will you?"

"What would you like, my dear?" queried Mrs. Timmins.

"Ink! Fetch me some ink! Can't ye find some laudanum somewhere?" and Mr. Timmins projected himself into the closet and pranced out with a bottle of arnica. "There," he growled, as he dashed the contents over the sardines, "there's your fish all ready for you," and Mr. Timmins flopped into his easy-chair and picked up the paper.

"Don't you want some sardines?" asked Mrs. Timmins, after a long pause.

"No, I don't," growled Mr. Timmins.

"But this is a fresh box," said Mrs. Timmins, displaying the sardines in neat layers.

"How'd you get it open?" demanded Mr. Timmins.

"With the can opener," replied his wife. "I found it in your tool box, where you put it to sharpen it."

Wouldn't Have It Known.

Four or five ladies bustled into Mr. M.'s private office.

"What can I do for you, ladies?" he asked pleasantly.

"Why, Mr. M.," began one of the visitors, "we are taking up a subscription, and we knew you wouldn't like it if we didn't give you an opportunity to subscribe."

Mr. M. bowed graciously and asked: "And the object? Of course, it is a worthy one, or you would not be interested in it."

"Yes, sir," replied the spokeswoman, "we think it is a very worthy object. It is to build a home for aged and indigent widows."

"Excellent, excellent! I shall take pleasure in making you out a check."

"Oh, how lovely of you, Mr. M.!" exclaimed the spokeswoman, when she received the bit of paper and read the amount—$500. "Oh, we didn't expect to get that much from you! We are ever so much obliged."

"So good of him!" and similar exclamations were heard as the check was passed around for the admiration of the party.

"But, Mr. M.," said the lady who handled the check last, "you haven't signed it."

"That is because I do not wish my benefactions known to the world," said Mr. M., modestly. "I wish to give the check anonymously." And he bowed the ladies out with great dignity.

As the Parson Told It.

R. R. Robinson, of Elmira, tells the following story on a minister who is a friend of his:

"Now, while this clergyman is not an Englishman, I believe he inclines that way, or at least his sense of humor does," said Mr. Robinson. "A few days ago a man at a little dinner propounded the following: 'Why is a tin can tied to a dog's tail like death?'

"The answer was, 'Because it is bound to occur.'

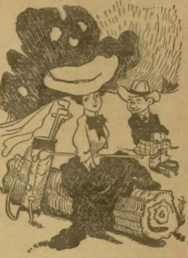
"This made quite a hit with the rector, and a few days later when he was invited out to dinner one evening a series of conundrums was passed around.

"The divine saw his chance and he asked the same question, 'Why is a tin can tied to a dog's tail like death?'

"No one knew the answer and the propounder immediately spoke up, 'Because it is sure to happen.'

"And he looked disappointed when the squib didn't break a laugh."

Pertinent Query.



Him—I see your social rival, Miss Budd, has her picture in today's paper.
Her—Indeed! What was she cured of?

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"THE MORE, THE LESS."

"The more you take the less you need until you need none—for you are cured. My effort all along was to avoid the evil of the ordinary remedy which pampers organs already weak and so makes the patient a slave to the pill. Remember—Nature expects every organ to do its duty."

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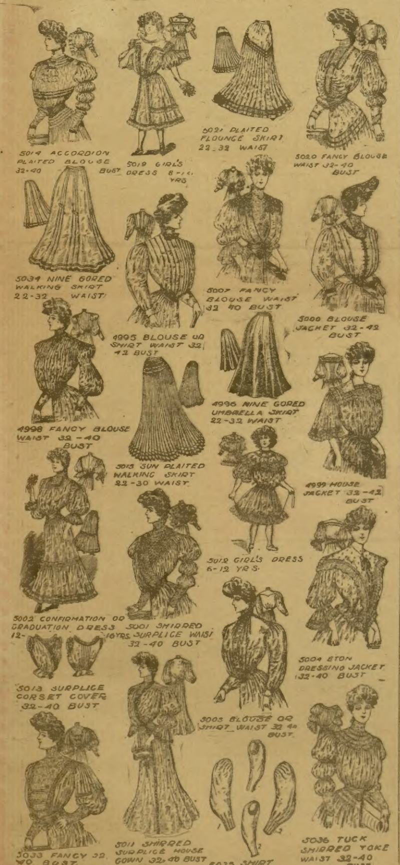
5014 ACCORDION PLAITED BLOUSE 32-40 BUST
5019 GIRL'S DRESS 8-14 YRS
5021 PLAITED FLOUNCE SKIRT 22-32 WAIST
5020 FANCY BLOUSE WAIST 32-40 BUST
5034 NINE GORED WALKING SKIRT 22-32 WAIST
5007 FANCY BLOUSE WAIST 32 40 BUST
5000 BLOUSE JACKET 32-42 BUST
4995 BLOUSE OR SHIRT WAIST 32-42 BUST
4996 NINE GORED UMBRELLA SKIRT 22-32 WAIST
4998 FANCY BLOUSE WAIST 32-40 BUST
5015 SUN PLAITED WALKING SKIRT 22-30 WAIST
4999 HOUSE JACKET 32-42 BUST
5012 GIRL'S DRESS 6-12 YRS.
5002 CONFIRMATION OR GRADUATION DRESS 12-16YRS
5001 SHIRRED SURPLICE WAIST 32-40 BUST
5004 ETON DRESSING JACKET 32-40 BUST
5013 SURPLICE CORSET COVER 32-40 BUST
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FOR YOUTHFUL EYES

MY MAMMA'S LAP.

BY STRICKLAND W. GILLILAND.

I like t' play wif dollies an' like t' go t' school;
I like t' jump my skippin' rope in mornings when it's cool;
I like t' play go-visitun while dolly takes her nap,
But sometimes nuffin' else'll do but sit in mamma's lap.

I like t' climb th' peach-tree an' I like to make mud-pies;
I like t' play wif puppy and I like a birfday s'prise;
I like t' go out ridin', an ist wear my little cap,
But when I'm tired an' sleepy, w'y I want my mamma's lap.

I like t' tend my playhouse—it's the fines' place in town;
I like t' play big lady wif long skirts a-hangin' down;
I like t' go t' Sunday school an' wear my new silk wrap—
But when a lump gets in my froat I ist want mamma's lap.

—American Motherhood.

North American Giant.

Far in the northland, according to the natives of the region around Norton Sound, lives the great giant Kinak. He is bigger than the giant who was killed by Jack the Giant Killer, and the way he was discovered was this:

There was an orphan who lived with a harsh uncle who made him work hard at hunting and fishing, and beat him unmercifully when he did not bring back enough game or fish. The boy had a long unpronounceable Eskimo name, but we will just call him Eskimo Joe.

One day Joe became lost on the barren tundra land, and night overtook him before he could find in which direction the village lay. In the dusk Joe saw before him a hill that looked like an enormous human foot. Removing the snow from between two elevations which were shaped like toes he found it warm and comfortable there and slept till morning.

When he awoke in the morning, the boy was astonished to hear a voice apparently right under his feet, saying: "Who are you? What has driven you to me to whom human beings never come?"

Then the boy realized that for three days he had been traveling on the body of the great giant Kinak, who had been lying asleep covered with a blanket of snow.

With Kinak's permission the boy built a hut in the shelter of the giant's huge nose, using for its construction hairs from Kinak's beard. When Joe was hungry, Kinak would reach out one of his great arms and seize deer, seals, wolverines, and whatever Joe wished for food.

For fuel to cook his food Joe used hairs drawn from the giant's mustache, until one day the giant said: "My mustache is getting pretty thin. I guess you would better gather your firewood from my head." The boy did so, and lived in comfort for many weeks.

Finally Kinak said: "You have a great appetite and use much firewood. If you stay here much longer using my hair for fuel I shall be baldheaded, and who ever heard of a baldheaded giant? Besides, I want to turn over. I am tired of lying on one side. You would better go home. If your uncle beats you just call me and I will come and chastise him."

Joe stepped before the giant's lips, Kinak gave one mighty breath and the boy was at the door of his uncle's hut before he knew what had happened.

Now Kinak had told Joe to keep the tips of the ears of all the fur-bearing animals and to take them with him in a basket when he went home. So when the boy entered his uncle's hut, the uncle said: "Where have you been? What have you brought back?" And Joe showed him the basket of ear tips and told the story of Kinak the Giant.

"I don't believe your story," said the uncle, but put the eartips in the storehouse and tomorrow I will beat you."

But the next morning when the storehouse was opened each eartip had changed into a fine fur-bearing animal and the pelts were so many that they made the uncle the richest man in the village. So he did not beat the boy, but quit work and proceeded to enjoy himself.

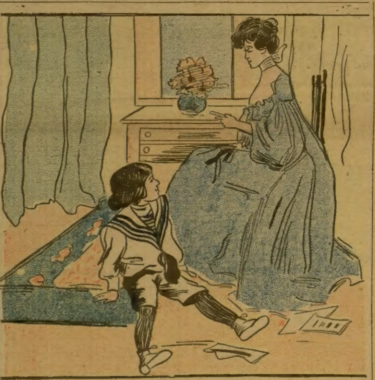
Finally the furs were all gone and the uncle said: "You stay at home and take care of things and I will go and find Kinak and get some more furs."

Following the boy's directions he came at last to the giant. "O ho!" cried Kinak. "So you have spent your fortune and come for more, have you?"

"Yes," replied the uncle, "and if you do not provide me with another fortune I will pull out the rest of your mustache and the rest of your head."

The uncle stepped in front of Kinak's lips as he said this and the giant, laughing a mighty laugh at the threat, blew the uncle away so far that he was never seen again.

As for Eskimo Joe, he became a great hunter and fisher and lived happily to a good old age. The giant still lives in the frozen north, though no one has ever seen him since the day when he blew Joe's uncle away with his laugh; but people know that he is still there from the fierce blasts of cold air accompanied by snow and sleet which sweeps down across the tundra lands whenever Kinak exhales one of his deep breaths.



Tommy—May I play with my toy sodiers today, mamma?
Mother—No, dear, it's Sunday.
Tommy—But I'll make out it's the Salvation Army.

Tom Tit's Experiment.

Here is a simple experiment by which you may imitate the sound of cathedral bells in your own room, and perhaps one of the strangest things about it is that no one but yourself will be able to hear them ringing.

Procure a yard of twine and loop it about in the middle. Slip the loop around the handle of a poker and draw it taut. Grasp each free end of the string in either hand. Wind some of it round each of your first fingers. Now press these fingers against your ears, shutting out all sound, and swinging the dangling poker until it dashes against the wall.

You will be surprised to perceive a series of heavy tones such as ring out from a cathedral clock as it booms out the hour, yet, while the room may be crowded, no one but you will be a listener to the mysterious peals unless they try the same experiment.

But what causes this phenomenon? This is answered best by describing a certain kind of toy noise maker which most boys have seen or made at some time or another. It is known by various names, but perhaps the term "devil-fiddle" is its most common term. It is very easily constructed by knocking out one end of a tin can and then puncturing the closed end with a tiny hole, just large enough to insert a piece of twine through—the twine knotted at its end so it cannot be pulled entirely through the hole.

Grasp the can in one hand, and, holding a piece of well-resined leather in the other, pull the string through the folded up leather or slide the leather along the string.

This will result in a most grating, discordant sound, altogether out of proportion to what you'd expect from such an action. So from this the extraordinary fact is established that it is the employment of the tin can which causes the great increase of sound. It is the hollow cavity in the can which is really responsible for this, and so it is with the ear. The hollow cavity in the ear enlarges the volume of sound emanating from the poker along the string, thus acting on the same principle as the can cavity which increases the sound produced on the string attached to it.

GEORGE BOASTER.

I'm a bully swimmer;
  I can 'most go overhand;
And yesterday I swum four strokes
  Straight out from the land.

I'm a corking runner,
  Last week I ran so fast
Alongside of the railroad track
  The steam cars came in last.

I'm a dandy shooter.
  When I take papa's gun
And go out in the forest,
  You should see the rabbits run.

I can do 'most everything
  'Most as good as men.
And I don't get tired,
  Not even now and then.

The Altogether.

A little girl of 8 was taken to visit a boy cousin of the same age.

"My dear," said the little girl's mother, "I want you to be careful, when playing with your cousin, never to let him see you in your chemise."

A few days after this the little boy knocked at his cousin's door and was refused admittance. Presently, however, she opened the door and bade him enter.

"Why wouldn't you let me come in before?" asked the small boy.

"Because," she replied frankly, "Mama said I must never let you see me in my chemise. But now I have taken it off, you may come in."—Lippincott's Magazine.

Dogs in the Ambulance Service.

The Austro-Hungarian War Dogs' Club has just held its first show of dogs for war and ambulance service. The highest officers in the army witnessed the performances of the dogs.

Soldiers had dispersed all over the field of action, and were concealed behind hedges, among shrubs and bushes. These were supposed to be the wounded. The dogs found them all, and either stayed with them and barked if the trainers were near enough to hear them, or ran for the trainer when the distance was too long. Then they were sent with messages contained in a locket fastened to their collars to which they had to bring answers.

Ants' Cowsheds.

One of the most interesting studies of insect life is the relationship between ants and plant lice or aphids, says St. Nicholas. These plant lice supply honeydew from the juices which they take as food from plants. The ants are very fond of this sweet substance, and care for the aphids in a manner that seems to us surprisingly intelligent. They sometimes carry them bodily to a better feeding ground and drive away certain of their enemies. It is claimed that they even build sheds of mud in the crotches of shrubs and small trees. On account of this insect relationship one may truthfully call the ants "farmers," the aphids "cows" and these protecting mud cases "cowsheds."

King Kissed Fish Woman.

On his recent visit to Paris King Alfonso passed one morning through the Central markets, where he was received by one of the prettiest of the fisherwomen, a buxom lass of 20, who is "Queen of the Market," and who presented him with a bouquet. He took her hand gently, and after kissing her fingers, placed a gold bracelet on her wrist.

Then he laughingly put his hands on her shoulders and kissed her on both cheeks. The crowd laughed and cheered, and the applause was terrific when President Loubet, not to be outdone in gallantry, stepped forward and diffidently kissed the much-embarrassed girl.

Cheerful Idiot.

"A deaf and dumb man may talk with his fingers," said the boarder who floor-walks between meals, "but he can't laugh with them."

"Oh, I don't know," rejoined the cheerful idiot. "Have you never heard of the glad hand?"